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THE DIARY OF JOHN S. TUCKER:
CONFEDERATE SOLDIER FROM ALABAMA

edited by

Gary Wilson

During the Civil War a number of soldiers on both sides recorded their experiences in personal diaries. John S. Tucker, a Confederate soldier from Alabama, was one such individual.

Tucker was born in 1834 and apparently lived in Alabama his entire life except during the war years. Following the war, he returned to Greensboro, Alabama. In 1876 he was elected sheriff of Hale County, but he evidently only served in that capacity a short time. On the 1880 census he was employed as a merchant in Greensboro. Tucker does not appear on the 1900 census, although his wife, Annie, and his three sons, Walter, Tene, and Fitz James, were living in Greensboro at that time. According to Mrs. Frances Test, granddaughter of John Tucker, an unidentified individual murdered Tucker. The violent act occurred at night while Tucker worked as railroad stationmaster in Greensboro. Presently, the exact date of Tucker's death is unknown; however, it is probable that he died in Greensboro between 1880 and 1900.

On May 30, 1860 Tucker married Annie Nutting in Green County, Alabama. In May the following year Tucker departed Greensboro as a member of Company D, 5th Alabama Regiment. The Alabamian apparently did not keep a diary in the early part of the war, and evidently he returned to Greensboro in his first year of service. The initial entry in Tucker's diary is March 23, 1862, and on that date he left Greensboro destined for Richmond, Virginia.

He recorded his experiences in three small booklets. The first one covers the dates March 23, 1862 to August 14, 1862, the second volume begins August 15, 1862 and ends November 29, 1863, and the last booklet starts on May 22, 1864 and concludes February 28, 1865. There are no entries from November 30, 1863 to May 21, 1864; however, it is likely that Tucker wrote a volume for this period but it has since been lost.

Tucker was a private when he entered the Confederate service in 1861, and on June 17, 1862 he became his company's supply sergeant. Since he did not mention another promotion, he probably was a sergeant until his last entry in 1865. Throughout most of the war, Tucker lived and worked behind the lines. His comments are significant, however, because they represent the experiences of a common soldier in one of the Confederacy's most important armies — the Army of Northern Virginia. Tucker served the first part of the war as a member of the First Corps, Army of the Potomac, commanded by General P.G.T. Beauregard. Later there were several command changes which affected Company D, 5th Alabama Regiment. For much of the war E. L. Hobson commanded the 5th Alabama Regiment which was a part of Brigadier General R. E. Rodes' Brigade, of Major General Daniel H. Hill's Division. As a member of this army, Tucker was present at many of the most important battles of the war: Antietam, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, Gettysburg, the Wilderness Campaign, and Petersburg.

Throughout the conflict, Tucker kept almost daily records of his activities. The following manuscript includes only the most important entries of Tucker's diary, and the spelling and language has been kept as exact as possible. This author owes special gratitude to Mrs. Frances Test of Houston, Texas and Robert Dalehite of Galveston, Texas, current guardian of the Tucker diary, for providing valuable assistance in this endeavor.

Sunday Mar 23d 1862

Left Greensboro at 2 O clock AM got to selma. went aboard the Senator & arrived in Montgomery at 12M.

Monday Mar 24

spent the day in Montgomery & had quite a dull time of it.

Mar 25 1862

Took the cars at 8 O'clock A.M. got to Atlanta at night.

Mar 26 1862

arrived in Augusta got Breakfast & took the Cars for Weldon

Mar 27 1862

arrived in Weldon at 10 A.M. Met any quantity of Troops. Could get nothing to eat & had to remain until night when we took a Box Car for Richmond.

Mar 28 1862

arrived in Petersburg at sun up, after passing a *very Cold* sleepless night in an open Box Car — went through the City on foot & took the train for Richmond where we arrived at 11 O'clock am.

Sunday 30 —

still in Richmond. took Box Cars at 4 O'clock & remained at depot until 8. spending the most unpleasant night since we left home.

— 31 —

On the RR all day with scarsly any thing to eat. Got to orange C.H. in the night. went to Epis Church & slept till morning.

Apl 1st 1862

Got up cooked our breakfast & left for Camp 5 Miles east of orange. arrived about 10 O'clock & met all the Boys.

— 2 —

spent the day in Camp. went to the 6th Ala & saw a good many acquaintances.

Thursday 3d 1862

Got orders to strike Tents & report at Orange C.H. Got there about 11 O'clk P.M. & camped on the side of a hill in an oak thicket on the east side of the Town & RR. pleasant night.

Apl 5th 1862

Got orders early this morning to *again* strike tent & report at orange C.H. as soon as possible. Packed up. put out & got there at 11 O'clk. A.M. & took open cars at dark. traveled all night. got no sleep at all.

Apl 6th 1862

Got to Richmond at 12 O'Clk & was treated very hospitably by the Citizens who met us with Cakes. Pres Bread. Meat & every thing good to eat. passed through the City & took a Steamer at 3 O'Clk P.M. & at 12M got off & marched the remainder of the night without any sleep for 2 nights.

Apl 7 1862

Stoped marching at sun up got breakfast & continued the march. arrived on the Battle field at 11 O'Clk A.M. where the Roar of Canon & musketing was distinctly heard & our Reg held in reserve. put up Bunks. Commenced raining & continued all night. Got no sleep at all.

Apl 8 1862

Still continues to rain. remained in camp all day. Brisk skirmishing going on all the time in a half mile of us. Got orders at dark to march to Mulbony Island a distance of 10 ms. Mud a foot deep nearly all the way. raining & awful cold. Got to camp at midnight. as wet as a rat & so Cold I could hardly walk. Worst March of the campaign.

Thursday. Apl 10th

Still in camp to day. Very cold yet snowing. Havent had my Boots off in five nights nor slept scarsly now at all during the times. Expecting Marching orders.

Friday Apl 11 1862

clear & pretty day. Got marching orders & left for Yorktown after dinner. Camped for the night in a mile of the City. Been quite unwell all day.

Saturday 12th 1862

Got up & continued the march to Yorktown & camped on the field that Cornwallis surrendered on and closed the first "American Revolution" Plenty of Yankees in sight of us but no fighting going on. Fair pretty day. feeling much better to day than yesterday.

Sunday Apl 13 1862

In camp & doing nothing. the day most unlike Sunday. some Playing Cards. Some washing clothes & others at various other things. Went in Town & looked all over it. A very delapidated looking place. Most of the houses shelled burned or pulled down & camps in place. fine day.

Wednesday Apl 16

Fair day. Brisk skirmishing going on. Yankees in sight. Out on picket all day. In the evening a regular engagement commenced & lasted until dark. Very heavy Canonading. Yankee loss heavy. Ours not so great. Was in about 1 1/2 Miles of the Battle.

Sunday Apl 20th

Rained all night last night. All hands got wet. didnt sleep but very little. To day seems most unlike Sunday. Instead of resting from our labours & listening to Church Bells, we hear nothing but the Roar of artillery & see nothing but large squads of men at allmost every imaginable Army work & duty. those not on duty or most of them amuse themselves by playing Poker, singing vulgar songs. Cursing & swearing & etc. Rained all day.

Saturday Apl 26

Rained the whole day. got a good nights sleep last night & had a good dinner to day. Peas pork biscuit & for desert Pan Cakes & Syrup. Wrote to Annie by Mr. Corvin.

Sunday Apl 27

To day the election of officers take place still cloudy but not raining this morning. Passed the Whiskey round & opened the polls. Election resulted. Peques "Col" Hall "Lt Col" Hobron "Major" as field officers. For Company I "Greensboro Guards" J W Williams "Capt" Dr. Rawisay "1st Lt" Joe Borden "2nd Lt" WC Tunstall 3d Lt" EP Jones O.S. This has been a Big day in many of the Regiments in electing their field & company officers & a great many of the men got gloriously *tight* — Ordered from the woods back to York Town at dark 110 men in the Co & 60 odd on the sick list.

Saturday May 3d

Nothing new to note. All quiet. orders to emigrate at 7 O'Clk P.M. & evakuated York Town burning Tents spiking Canon & destroying every thing that could not be taken away.

Sunday May 4

Marched all night last night through the mud & got to Williamsburg at 12 O'Clk PM a very nice though quite an old looking place. The Country surrounding for miles being all cleared up rendered the view magnificiently beautiful. The whole plain being covd with Troops artillery cavalry. Wagons ambulances & all moving in the same direction extending as far as the eye could see. In passing through Williamsb'g all the eligible places in the buildings were crowded with men women & children all of whom wore a countenance of Sadness & deep regret They knew we were on the retreat and I could not help feeling sorry for a people who were burning with a feeling of humiliation at the prospect of their quiet firesides soon being visited by a set of "yankee Mauraders" & made desolate. We were marched out 2 ms north of the City when we camped for the night and had the pleasure of enjoying a good nights sleep all hands were much in need of.

Monday May 5th

The advance of the Yankees attacked our rear guard Yesterday & had a sharp skirmish in which we repulsed them taking 1 canon 5 caisons & a number of Prisoners. The attack was again renewed this morning with more energy & most of the Army was ordered back at day light to the scene of action a short distance south of Williamsburg. We left for the scene of action at 1 P.M. & doubled quicked it for 2 miles through mud & water. Were drawn up in line of Battle & held in reserve — the fight raged all day & rain poured down incessantly. We captured 9 canon a lot of Horses over 300 prisoners & a stand of colours, besides killing many. loss of life on our side very small until late in the evening when 2 Reg were ordered to charge a redoubt in an open field and were nearly annihilated. Dark came on & separated the Combatants each holding their own positions. all kind of wounds could be seen as the men were brought in. The Reg had to stand in lines

of Battle in an open field nearly all night without fire & in a cold hard rain. I was detailed to assist in carrying off the wounded & at dark *flew up to Roost* in a Hen house but didnt get a particle of sleep.

Tuesday May 6th

Commenced retreating again this morning at 2 O'clk A.M. The troops nearly all broken down from fatrigrs hunger & want of sleep. The Road for 5 miles was strewn with Blankets, over coats, clothing, knapSacks, Cooking Utinsils, Sick Men &c &c. Roads awful muddy & Wagons & artillery continually boging down. The Sick & wounded left in Williamsburg at the mercy of the Yankees. The march was continued 18 or 20 miles to a little place called "ordinary" (quite an appropriate name) when we camped for the night. The men were so hungary that they ate corn, collard stalks, Turnips, Beets or any thing they could get hands on.

Friday May 9th

Took up the line of march at 11 a.m. Got to Chickahomine River at night and camped for the night. Bad roads but good weather. all very tired & hungry and nothing to eat. soon killed some Beeves. got hard Bread & was all right.

Sunday May 11 1862

Nothing new to note to day. had two Battallion Drills to day which is the first drilling I have done since I've been in the service. Ed & Geo returned to camp.

Thursday May 15th

All hands roused up this morning out of our comfortable Bunks an hour before day-light & didnt take up the line of march until 1/2 past 3 O'clk. Then went about 4 miles and camped. had a muddy wet & disagreeable march.

Friday May 16th

Commenced traveling again at 11 O'clk a.m. and continued until after dark. Roads very bad & all quite hungry. Truly is the life of a soldier hard.

Saturday May 17th

Traveled again to day & Bivouaced at night on a level plain covered with Honey-Suckle bushes as thick as they could Stand, about waist high and in full bloom, which presented to the eye quite a pretty Flower Garden. I imagined if Annie had been there how very soon would she have had her *pretty little hands* full of them, but to the weary and hungry Soldier they did not present many charms. Drew our Rations cooked & eat our dinner & supper & tumbled down upon our blankets to rest, repose and refresh ourselves for the toils of tomorrow.

Sunday May 18th

Continued our journey early this morning & struck camp within 3 miles of Richmond at 11 O'clk A.M. where it is thought we will remain for some time — having run about as far as we can without giving up Richmond. Went to an Ice pond in the evening and had a glorious wash. Thousands of Troops in Bathing & having a jolly time of it.

Monday May 19th

Had to report on the sick list for the 1st time. Have had Diarrhea pretty bad all day & feel quite unwell. Got a pr of New Shoes to day which came in a good time.

Thursday May 22

Fine day. Still in Camp at same place. Got appointment of Clerk of the Company which relieves me of Drill Wrote to Annie.

Friday May 23 1862

On detail to day. to go to Richmond & arrest straglers. Went all over the whole city & out to Camp Winder — the nastiest place I ever saw in my life. Got back to camp at daylight having been up all night and about as tired as I well could be.

Sunday May 25th

Left our Camp this morning & went out on picket on the same road we came up on, and about 5 miles distant making the distance to Richmond 8 miles. A fight expected every hour but every thing has been unusually quiet to day. perhaps

its owing to "McClellan^s" religious proclivities — being opposed to fighting on Sunday. Have passed the day in sleeping & reading the "Bible" only when on duty. Cloudy but pleasant Weather.

Saturday May 31st

Had 2 days rations hard bred issued fixed up & moved off at 8 O'Clk AM to attack the enemy — had to go through mud & water, the latter in many places waist deep. Creeks, Ponds & Branches — for about 5 miles. Engaged the enemy at 2 O'Clk & had a desperate fight which lasted until dark. We drove them back one mile taking all their earth works a large number of canon, small arms, amunition. Camp equipage provisions &c &c our loss very heavy. Most of our Boys exchanged their Guns for better ones. got canteens & many other little tricks from the Yankees. we slept on the field and on

Sunday June 1st

the attack was again renewed on our left & a desperate fight ensued lasting until about 12 O'clk & resulting in the repulse of the enemy with the loss of their camp equipages &c &c. We buried all of our dead this evening & at night marched back several miles over very muddy roads & camped for the night. all hands nearly broken down.

Tuesday June 3d

a fight expected to day & the whole army drawn up in a line of Battle where they remained until night without a Fight. our whole army fell back yesterday about 2 miles this side of the Battlefield of Saturday & sunday for the purpose of getting a better position & an other Big fight is hourly expected. Commenced at dark & Rained the entire night has hard as it could pour and our camp was in a complete flood.

Saturday June 7th

Rained nearly all day. Sharp Skirmishing going on a good part of the day. Issued Whiskey to the Reg: & the Boys all got pretty lively.

Sunday June 8 1862

Heavy canonading near camp this morning. Went to church to day for the first time in the army & listened to an excellent sermon, Introduction — Hym — “Show pitty Lord O! Lord Let a repenting *rebel* Live.”

Text.

2 Ch & 3d verse of second Timothy. in which was drawn a striking contrast between the C. Soldier & the soldier of the Cross — delivered by the Rev Mr. Hogue — a talented & nice speaker. He gave us much good advice, the most important of which was to abstain from the use of *Ardent Spirits* & profane *swearing*, two of the worst habits in an army. particularly the latter as an *oath* is always on the end of the tongue of at least three fourths. The former is not much indulged in as it is seldom issued — however we got a ration of it yesterday & all seemed to enjoy it freely — and I some times think that it was occasionally issued in small quantities when we are in the rain mud & water it would be an advantage — particularly to health.

Got a letter from Annie to day & answered the same — also wrote to Ma.

Tuesday June 17th

Quite cold last night & there was almost frost this morning. clear cool & pleasant day. Got the appointment of Com’y Sgt which relieves me from all company duty, gives me a horse to ride & pays \$7 a month more than a private.

Sunday June 22d

Today has passed off very quickly — at this writing I am sitting on a Breast work beside the Williamsburg Turnpike. 3 miles from Richmond in a large barren field. where I can see at a glance any quantity of Camps, Troops Wagons moving to & fro. Artillery, Caissons, ambulances, Horses and all the appliances of “grim visaged War” and in the distance far above the top of trees is plainly exhibited the Yankee Balloon taking a view of our position, works and Capitol. That some important movement is on foot is evident but what it is none

except the leaders know. The day has been beautiful and pleasant beyond description & the weather all that could be desired since May '30th, but alas! its too far from *home* & the loved ones to render the Situation agreeable or pleasant to me under any Circumstances.

Tuesday June 24 1862

Continues Pleasant & dull. Had a hard summers Rain late in the evening which effectually layed a disagreeable dust. Visited the 11th Ala to day & saw a good many of the Marengo Co boys.

Thursday June 26

Our Reg was called up twice last night. The second time at 3 O clk this morning when they were moved off about 6 miles to the Mechanicsville Turnpike when a hard battle has been going on since 4 P.M. until this writing (after Sun down) with what result I know not, having been left in charge of Com'y Stores —its quite likely our Reg and Brigade is engaged. Will join them in the morning & learn all the facts. The weather is beautiful & any quantity of fighting is anticipated on tomorrow.

Friday June 27th 1862

Went to sleep last night with the roar of Canon sounding in my ears & was woke up before day-break this morning to pack up & move Com'y Stores &c and the same sound was going on. I hastened to the scene of action & succeeded in finding the Reg at 11 AM & found they had not been engaged. I then returned to bring up the Com'y wagons & did not get with it again. Saw any quantity of wounded & dead men & all the pariphanalia of war. truly is war a horrid necessity. The weather is clear & pleasant & the roads very dusty.

Saturday June 28 1862

Got back to Maj Websters Camp last night & remained with him. This morning had the wagons loaded with provisions and returned to the Reg finding it late in evening — in going on I passed over several Battle Fields that were strongly contested & the sight of dead men & horses was appalling —

lying in every direction & horribly thick. Southerners & Yankees all together. The fight was hardest yesterday evening & Geo Price was badly wounded in making a charge. We have any quantity of goods & Chattles captured from the enemy.

Sunday June 29

Remained at the Wagon yard to day & issued Rations to the sick in camp & rested. Nearly worn out from riding night and day. The fight still goes on and the enemy continues to fall back as fast as they can.

Wednesday July 2

Commenced raining last night & still continues this morning. Went down to the Reg: & found only 10 men in Company & they were worn out. Was on the battle field also & never saw such destruction before. Returned to Camp late at night & have caught the mumps.

Friday July 4th 1862

Got a good nights rest last night and rose early this morning feeling much better. Got breakfast & left for the Reg. 16 miles below and got to them about 1 P.M. found them all lazying round doing nothing except resting. No fighting going on to day but our forces are in pursuit of the Yankees. No National salutes have been fired by the Yankees as is their usual custom. Guess they are tired of listening to the roar of artillery for last ten days. Got a letter from A & wrote to her.

Saturday July 19th

Wagon went down below Seven Pines to a Yankee Hospital & got a fine lot of Ice. Had a lot of "Bust Head" Commissary Whiskey on hand & what a time we have had drinking Cocktails Mint Jewlips and Ice water though no one got the least *tight*. fine day though warm.

Sunday July 20th

Spent the day in writing to Annie & enjoying the luxury of our fast melting Ice. The day has been quite pleasant, though

dull & loansome. Capt. Adams spent the day in Richmond & with the exception of some of the boys occasionally dropping in to get some *Ice*, 'I have been alone much to my gratification. Drilling for the day was dispensed with — many could be seen reading their Bibles, while others were whiling away the times in sleeping & writing to the loved ones at home. What a reformation fighting brings about in a Regiment and what a change has come over the spirit of the dreams of the 5th Ala since the Battle of Seven Pines.

Had a good dinner but its too far from home to relish it with any degree of satisfaction.

Monday July 21st

Have had occasional showers — pleasant — Been busy making out returns all day.

The roar of artillery has been sending forth its thunder peels all day, with short intervals, and for what purposes did not occur to me until dark, when I could see numerous sky Rockets going up in the City and other excessive demonstrations in fire-works. I recollected that it was the anniversary of the "Battle of Manassas." The cars on the York River R.R. also came by our camp from the White House with a full display of fire works.

[The last entry in volume one is dated August 14, 1862]

Friday Aug 15 1862

Got up at 3 A.M. & went down to the Regt on Picket 8 Miles below Camp, gave out rations and then went to a house, spent several hours in camp with some nice Ladies, got a good dinner for \$1 and then returned to Camp. Weather Cool & pleasant.

Sunday Aug 17 1862

Went down to the Regt on picket again and got back to Camp in time to partake of a good Dinner, then went to the Hospital in Town & found Tun [Tucker's brother] pitching into the Cakes & Jelly which Davis W. brought us from home. I pitched in & havent enjoyed any thing as much in a long while. Caught Cold & feel quite unwell.

Tuesday Aug 19 1862

The whole division was stired up 2 hours before day & took up the line of march at Sun up. Went through Town Called on Tun and found him doing finely. Took the Brook Turnpike in the Northern suburbs of the Town & Bivouaced 8 miles from the City. Road was very dusty but we had a good time getting plenty of green Corn, apples, peaches, Melons, Chickens Eggs Cider &c &c. on the way.

Tuesday Aug 26 1862

Struck Tents, loaded wagons packed up & moved off at Sun up. Traveled all day nearly parell in with the Central R.R. crossing it every few miles and Camped in an old Field 2 miles north of "Beaver Dam Station" Walked all day & was tired enough to sleep quite soundly. Weather pleasant. Roads firm & free from dust.

Saturday Aug 30th

Took an early start Crossed the Rapidan River (the troops all wading across) and got to Culpper C.H. at 2P.M. Never have seen such destruction of property fences, farms & every thing in my life. Rode Over the Battle Fields of Cedar Mountain & saw any quantity of dead Yankee feet & heads sticking out of the ground, about half buried & causing the air to be filled with quite an unpleasant effluvia. The Town of Culpeper is much devastated but a pretty little place. Saw any quantity of sick and wounded Yankees in the place that Old Pope didnt have time to get away. Traveled on 4 Miles north of Town & camped on Mud Run.

Monday Sept 1 1862

Commenced traveling again early. Went by Warrenton Springs & took a good look round. Hotel burned and the place literally torn to peices. 5 miles farther on & we came to the little Village of Warrenton — decidedly the handsomest Town I've seen in Va. Came on through & got dinner at a private house and struck camp at Gainsville 8 Miles from Manassas. The Country north of Culpeper C.H. is quite broken though rich & pretty notwithstanding the Yankees have nearly destroyed every thing they could. The people rec'd us every where with demonstra-

tions of gladness, particularly the Ladies. Had a very hard rain in the evening & got gloriously wet.

Tuesday Sep 2 1862

Continued our Journey through a very pretty part of the Country. Went all over the Battle Field and never saw as many dead Yankees on a field before. Was at the store house where the 4th Ala fought on the 21 July 1861 when Bartow fell and nearly all over the old Battle Field. Camped at dark 10 miles from Fairfax CH on the Winchester Turnpike.

Wednesday Sept 3d

Cooked rations early & took up the line of March for Lusburg, passing through a delightful Country & passg through the Town after dark. The Moon shown brightly & the Ladies & Citizens crowded the side walks. Cheering us up & seemingly perfectly delighted to see us which was duely appreciated judging from the deafning yells that went up from each regt as they filed by. Went out 2 miles & camped for the night.

Friday Sep 5th

Our Regt & Brigade Crossed the Potomac just below the "Point of Rocks" early this Morning & were the first troops to make tracks on the soil of Md. I left after dinner Crossed over to the Regt and then Came back after the wagon train at Camp. riding all night & getting no sleep at all. and crossing back into Md.

Saturday Sep 6th. at sun up feeling as sleepy & hungry as a man well could feel. Took up the line of march for Frederick a distance of 15 ms from the Potomac & Camped in 4 ms of the Town. I rode in Town & saw a very pretty place. Got dinner on the way side at 2\$ and a very good one at that.

Friday Sep 12 1862

Took an early start this morning for Hagerstown but traveled very slow having quite a mountainous road to go over. Passed through Boonsborough early & found many warm Sympathisers in the place. Camped in 6 ms of Hagerstown. Expecting a fight and may remain here several days. Had another rain this evening.

Sunday Sep 14 1862

Was ordered off early this Morning back in the direction of Middletown where a hard fight is going on 9 AM — Genl Garland Killed early this morning. The 5th Ala ordered to the scene of action early in the morning. In the evening a general engagement commenced which resulted most disastrously to our arms. Our Brigade "cut all to pieces" & many of our men taken prisoners. Only 40 odd men to be found in the 5th at dark. at which time we commenced retreating leaving all our wounded in the enemy's hands. traveled all night long. The fight was at North Mountain 11½ miles east of Boonsboro from which I presume it will take its name. Never saw so much stragling in all my life.

Monday Sep 15th 1862

The army was halted 7 miles from Sparksburg & 3 from the Potomac and formed in line of Battle where they remained all day, having a little fight in the evening. Rode all day try to get provisions for the Men. Some of our Men came in. Harpers Ferry captured.

Tuesday Sep 16th

Jackson's Forces came up early this morning and in the evening a furious fight commenced which lasted only a short time.

Wednesday Sep 17 1862

The fight was opened this morning at day brake & an awful canonading continued on both sides until about 10 A.M. when it partially ceased & small arms took the place for a short time. The fight continued unceasingly & most furiously lasting the entire day & until 9 Oclk at night when all things quieted down except the rumbling of the ambulances, which were going all night. Great many wounded on our side but not many killed. Enemys loss not Known as boath parties held about the same position as when the fight commenced.

Thursday Sep 18 1862

All quiet to day except picket skirmishing. The army engaged

most of the day in burrying the dead. Wagons all crossed the Potomac into Va. Weather fine.

Friday Sep 19 1862

The whole army fell back last night several miles on the Va side of the River. Rode nearly all night long.

Saturday Sep 20th

Marched nearly all day. stoped at Smithfield got supplies & then travel all night long. camping Sunday Sep 21 5 miles north of Martinsburg at 10 am all worn out & as sleepy as possible to be. Got breakfast & slept until evening then got up & wrote to Annie.

Saturday Oct 25th

Struck tents this morning at day brake and started off in the direction of Charlestown. Got to the RR in the evening & Comc'd tearing up the track. Troops worked all night and destroyed the road within 3 Miles of Harpers Ferry.

Monday Nov 24th

started at day-brake this morning & crossed the mountain which consumed the better part of the day. Walked 23 miles. camped near Chigleysville.

Sunday Nov 30th

Continued the march early this morning & camped at night near Spotsylvania C.H. all hands pretty well tired down.

Friday Dec 12 1862

The firing was renewed early this morning at Fredericksburg & later in the day at Port Royal. Continuing until late in the evening. Got orders at Sun down to go to Fredericksburg & had to travel all night long. through the Cold a distance of 16 Miles. &

Saturday Dec 13 1862

we halted at day brake to take a short rest preparatory to opening a general fight, which commenced about sun up &

continued the entire day in sight of Fredericksburg. our men getting much the best of the fight though the loss was heavy on both sides. Our Brigade was not engaged but were under fire for some time & several wounded. Went to the Depot.

Monday Feby 16 1863

Went to Frederiksburg to day and rode all over the place. Never looked at so dilapidated a place in my life. Houses burned down & shot to pieces, furniture destroyed, fences burnt up & general destruction of every species. The Yankees were right on the opposite side of the river almost in stones throw of us with many of their huge Siegr pieces looking down upon the almost demolished old City.

Sunday April 11th 1863

Another dull week of inactivity has closed with nothing transpiring worthy of record. The weather has been warm & pleasant. Some little skirmishing has occurred along the line but not sufficient to indicate an early move on either side.

Wednesday April 29 1863

The Yankees Commenced Crossing the river this morning at day brake below Fredericksburg and our Army was very soon in motion. A general tearing up of winter quarters & throwing away old trinnpris [sp ?]. Were rumored near Hamiltons Crossing where we camped for the night. The Y——s kept Crossing all day & brisk skirmishing was kept up. Had a pretty hard rain in the evening which lasted most of the night.

Saturday May 2 1863

Train was ordered up above Spottsylvania C.H. where it Camped at night. A hard fight took place in the evening near Chandlersville.

Sunday May 3 1863

The fight was renewed this morning at day light & lasted until after 12 O'Clock, being a desperate fight all the time. The enemy was driven from every position with terrible slaughter

on both sides. Terrie wounded & taken prisoner. The Right was badly used up. went on the Battle field in the evening. Came back & wrote to Annie.

Tuesday May 5 1863

Removed this morning near Chancelorsville. Troops in line of battle all day but no fighting. Rained very hard in the evening & I got ringing wet. Still burrying the dead. Never saw as many wounded in all my life.

Tuesday June 9th

The Yankee Cavalry advanced this morning & a hard Cavalry fight took place, resulting in our men Driving them across the river at Beverlys ford. Infantry was all ordered up near the fight. Wagon train sent back to Culpeper & ordered up again in the evening to same Camp. Carter left us to go to Richmond.

Friday June 12

Took up the line of march early. Crossed the Blue Ridge Mountains & got to Front Royal in the Shenandoah Valley in the evening. Camped Near a little Town called Milwood.

Saturday June 13

Started again early this morning. passed through Smithfield & ran the Yanks out of Berryville where a large amount of Plunder was Captured. Pursued them until night & then Camped about 10 ms from Bunker Hill.

Sunday June 14

Had a dreadful hard march & reached Martinsburg at sun down and drove the Yankees out in double quick time. Capturing Several pieces of Artillery & a good many stores. Some of the women & Citizens were delighted to see us though the Town is rotten to the Core. Every where else we were greeted with the most enthusiastic welcome & in Smithfield in a substantial manner as the side walks were crowed with ladies dispensing Buttered Bread, Milk, Meat, Boquets &C. with lavish hands.

Friday June 19th

Got orders & left for Hagerstown early. Arrived there about 12M. Saw a good many *Sisih* women. Went 2 Miles out of Town & camped. Had a hard rain in the evening. Wrote to Annie at night.

Monday June 22

Got orders early this morning struck tents and left for Pa. Went through Hagerstown & large Crowds of people turned out to see us and many little Sisish flags were displayed Entered the state of Pa at Mutton Town at 12 O'Clock and got to Gruncastle in the evening & went into Camp.

Tuesday June 23d

Went out to the foot of the Allegany Mountains with a Squad of Cavalry after Beef Cattle and had a lively time. Men had all ran off & the women were scared to *death generally*. until they found they were not going to be interfered with. Got 100 head Cattle.

Saturday June 27th

Moved off early this morning. had a hard march and reached Carlisle at sun down all jaded & worried down. and Camped in the U.S. Barracks. A very nice Town but inhabited by very mean people.

Wednesday July 1 1863

This is to me the sadest day of the war. The troops marched to Geddysburg. where a terrible battle was fought in which poor Tunie [Tucker's younger brother] was Killed. Never shall I forget my feelings when I got to him & found him lifeless. How sudden & heartrendering the change. had parted with him only a few hours before in perfect health & fine spirits. Never dreaming that it was the last & final intermission. Thus ended the life of one of the Noblest & best boys in early youth that ever lived. & brings vividly to memory the fact that in "The Midst of life we are in Death.

Thursday July 2d

Was present at the burial this morning & saw him as decently

interred as possible. fixed a head board & marked the place of his burial. O! My. what an awful thought that his final resting place is so far from his devoted Parents. Bro & Sister and in a Yankee Country. (Direction — Buried one Mile north of Gettysburg on the west side of the Pike leading from Gettysburg to Middletown about 1/2 mile West of said Pike. near a dirt road at the foot and running aprellel with a range of high hills right in front of a large *Red Barn*) Fight continues all day but now I feel perfectly indifferent as to the Result. all that was dear to me in this army is gone & I care not what the result is.

Friday July 3

Fight goes on. Thousands of our men killed & wounded.

Saturday July 4th

Fighting still Continues. Left Gettysburg this morning en route for Williamsport Md with the wagon train. Were intercepted on the Mountain & lost a good many wagons. Yankees Captured Westcott & a great many others. & never saw such a running of wagons riping generally.

Monday July 6th

Wagons continue to pour in and never saw such a crowd arrangement in all my life.

Tuesday July 7 1863

The same state of affairs whist to day. River high & every body badly scared. had a hard fight with the Cavalry who attempted to Capture the wagons. Lost several men but drove them back. Started at dark with the Com'y train, went to Hagerstown & Camped.

Sunday July 12th

Went into Town. Very dull day. Every one has a melancholly look. & very little to say. Every available house in the place is converted into a hospital & crowded with unfortunate victims. the slightly wounded being sent off as rapidly as possible across the river.

Monday July 13th

The army Crossed the Potomac back into Va. The river was pretty full. Nearly swimming to a horse and all the troops had to wade. Traveled all night long & the rain poured down in torrents all the time. had an awful night of it.

Sunday August 16 1863

Nothing of any importance whatever has transpired since my last memorandum. Remained a few days at Luray. From there we crossed the Blue Ridge Mountains at "Graves Gap" on the 29th July. Camped at Criglersville. a little Town at the foot of the Mountains in Madison County, for several days. From there we came to orange C.H. where we arrived on the 3d Inst. and where we now remain at this writing. Have had an exceedingly dull time. Mingled with an over abundance of Sorrow grief and loneliness. Have had no tidings from home in over 2 months. which adds much to the misery of my present Condition. Think a letter Certainly will come to hand soon. Cant be possible that I am to be kept in such suspense much longer. Have been ordered to report back to Co "D" but as yet, have not gone. Weath has been & still continues exceedingly warm & unpleasant. No indications of any movement of either army soon.

Wednesday Sept 23 1863

Days come and go, and with them nothing to relieve the dullness of the times. Left camp at orange CH on the 16th & came down on the Rapidan where skirmishing with the enemy has been going on ever since but no fight as yet. Got the news of Braggs fight in Tenn to day. Killing frost this morning. Wrote to Annie by Mat Jones.

Tuesday Oct 13 1863

Traveled on again to day, a *little* Cavalry fight took place on the Rapahammock. resulting in the Capture of several hundred Yankees. Some small arms & horses. Got a nice Burnside Carbine. Camped at Jeffersonton.

Saturday Nov 7th 1863

Yankees disturbed our quiet to day by shelling our Camps and

crossing the river. Captured nearly all of the 30th N.C. Right which was on picket at Kelleys Ford. Got orders & moved the train to Brandy Sta: where we stoped a short time. & then traveled all night long. Dident get to close my eyes.

Sunday Novr 8th 1863

Traveled on to day until we crossed the Rapidan River at Rapidan Sta. then Camped until night when orders came to move down to Motons Ford, which required nearly all night and makes two nights that I have had no sleep at all. Got to our old Camp just at day brake.

Saturday Nov 28th

Position of affairs still the same. throwing up earth works. Moved back on the plank Rd. with the wagon trains.

[There are no entries from November 30th 1863 to May 22d 1864. Apparently one volume of Tucker's diary is missing.]

Monday May 23rd

Hooked up again early this morning & moved on to Taylorsville 1½ Miles south of Hanover Juntion & camped. Yankees have advanced to the North Anna & heavy skirmishing going on between the contending parties. Genl Lee fortifying and a fight is predicted to take place soon.

Sunday May 29th

Moved on early start this morning, passing north & in sight of Richmond & camped at Mecanicksville on the battlefield that opened the first, *series* of engagements around Richmond in 1862. and the plains all look quite familiar. No news from the *front*. more than skirmishing is going on & another battle expected to take place soon. Finished a letter to Walter also wrote to Annie. Weather clear & decidedly pleasant.

May 31 Tuesday

To day closes a month of Blood & carnage unequalled, perhaps in history, and still continues furiously. Have spent the day quietly at camp. Wrote to Parks Mark, Price & Ma.

Friday June 3rd

Desperate fighting commenced at day-light & continued throughout the entire day. The canonading being exceedingly heavy, shaking the ground for miles around. The Yankees charged portions of the line as many as thirteen times but were repulsed in every attack with terrible loss. the ground being literally covered with their dead.

Sunday June 5th

12M. Up to this time every thing remains very quiet. Not a gun having been fired — and it seems as though the two Commanders of each army, intend to suspend operations and properly observe the day. a slow constant rain has continued all the morning, with little prospect of it, ceasing to day. Night. Strange to say not a gun has been fired during the day and supreme quiet has reigned for the first sunday in many. Throughout our army religious services have been held along the lines. Spent the day in camp, having quite a dull time, the day being rainy and gloomy.

Tuesday June 7th

Considerable artillery firing during the day in the direction of the lower James. Result unknown. It is reported that Grant is again changing his base and will probably pass to the South side of the James. Passed off the day in camp. Wrote to A.E.: and took a delightful bath in the Chickahominy: weather. Cool. clear & pleasant.

Wednesday June 8th

The report of Grants change of base proves to be false. Sheridan starts on another raid & Hampton pursues. Some little fighting with unimportant results. Grant still continuing to fortify. Nothing further heard from Breckenridge or the valley command. Moved our Camp to the South side of the Chickahominy.

Tuesday June 14th

Took a trip down to the front at Gains Mill & was astonished to see such extensive works. Every body had left & every

thing looked desolate. Got the news of Hamptons two days fight. Saturday and Sunday with Sheridan in which he gained a brilliant victory at Trevillian Depot 10 miles below Gordonsville. Nothing further heard from the valley.

Thursday June 16th

Passed a dull day in camp. Fighting going on near Petersburg but nothing Known of the result further than that the Yankees were repulsed with heavy loss. Nearly all of Grants forces have crossed to the South Side of the James river. doubtless for the purpose of trying to capture Petersburg and then advance upon Richmond from the rear.

Monday June 20th

Went to Petersburg to day on business of the ordnance dep't. Both Armies in line of battle near the Town & heavy canonading & skirmishing going on all the time. A good many Shells have been thrown into the City but very little damage done. Camped in an old field under a pine tree near the appomattox river.

Thursday July 14th

Wrote to Annie. & then spent the remainder of the day in reading a batch of Richmond papers. Firing heard at P————g yesterday proved to be a vigorous shelling of the City. resulting in considerable damage to the place. Weather quiet fine.

Saturday July 30

Was woke up this morning by the roar of artillery & small arms in the vicinity of P————g. The firing was *intensely* heavy & lasted until 10 A.M. at which time the Yankees who were handsomely repulsed & did not renew the assault again. A portion of our line had been undermined & was blown up at day break. Killing & wounding a good many of our men. which was followed by a desperate assault in which the Yanks gained a temporary advantage but were very soon driven back to their old position. where they were content to remain quiet for the remainder of the day. at least — leaving the ground literally covered with their dead & wounded. Went to

P————g & returned to the train 3 Miles south of the City where we camped at Poplar Spring Church for the night. a *terribly warm* day.

Sunday July 31 1864

Went to Dunloss Xing. passed through the Most exposed part of the City & found it much more damaged than I had been led to believe. Saw a good many of our wounded & several of our dead. that had been brought in. An intensely hot day. Shower of rain in the evening. Extremely quiet day on the lines.

Thursday Aug 4

One year ago to day. the March from Pa. was completed and Tents pitched at Orange CH. Many changing scenes have occurred during the time & many a noble spirit that was then buoyant with hope for the future has passed from the stage of action & been launched into eternity. through the instrumentality of a wicked & brutal war. but there is an abiding hope that their lives have not been laid down in vain. Had a good rain last night & to day is much more pleasant. Every thing continues dull & we are allowed to remain quietly in our pleasant camp.

Tuesday Aug 16th

Moved on early this morning in advance of the wagons. Crossed the Rapidan at Moretons Ford (the train crossing at Summer-ville) and got to Culpeper CH. at 12M. The Town and County generally was so badly used up I hardly knew any place that was once familiar and the people generally are in the most destitute circumstances. Wagons got in late in the evening & we immediately turned back toward Orange. Went down Near Raum Ford & spent the night at a Mr Smiths.

Saturday Sept 3rd

Rec'd the news of the nomination of Geo B McClellan & Geo H Pendleton at the Chicago Convention for President & vice President. The nomination considered a good one for the south & the ticket is expected to be elected in Novr but my opinion is it will be badly beaten. Rec'd a letter from Annie

& one from Ma.

Tuesday Oct 11

Quite an excitement raised at H'd qrs to day in consequence of orders having been rec'd to return all able bodied men to their companies. Creating quite a stir in every dep't. Nearly all will have to leave their easy & safe places in a day or so & return to the dangers of the battlefield. I endeavour to submit as philosophically as possible but at the same time would much prefer remaining. Weather has again turned warm with indications of more rain soon.

Monday Oct 17th

Spent the day in making a pair of Saddle Bags and other necessary arrangements to go to my Company as soon as the order comes for me but hope it may be delayed sometime. Considerable shelling along the picket lines this side of P————g during the day. otherwise every thing is quiet. Rec'd a letter from Walter containing a Photograph of Annie which I had written to him for.

Sunday Nov 27th

Another week has passed by without the occurrence of any thing of special interest. The weather during the week for the most part has been exceedingly Cold and disagreeable. Went to P————g yesterday. Have not written to Annie to day being the first sunday in many that I have failed to do so. but in view of Shermans position in Ga twould be useless as a letter would not reach Ala. Dont expect to hear from home again in a long while. Been busy all day writing up official Business.

Sunday Dec 4th

Nothing of any importance has occurred since my last date. The demonstration of the Yankees only resulted in a raid on Stony Creek Depot on Thursday in which they were successful. capturing the Garrison. some 200 men. spiking 2 ps artillery destroying a small lot of Government supplies, one train of Cars and burning every building on the premises. after which they beat a hasty retreat before the "rebels" arrived on the

ground. Nothing definite has been heard from Ga further than Sherman is still advancing on Savannah & laying waste to the Country. A big fight is expected to take place soon and strong hopes are entertained for the ultimate capture or annihilation of his whole army but I fear he will get through without any serious injury or loss to his army. Communication is still cut off & another week rolls by without any tidings from home, another sunday passes & no letter is written to my Dear Annie. How long is such a state of affairs to exist?

Friday Dec 9th

AP Hill came up with his infantry Corps & a sharp fight ensued. the enemy immediately commenced retreating back to their lines and were closely pursued until dark. No general attack was made but heavy skirmishing was kept up all day. Damage done to the RR was slight. intensely cold day.

Sunday — Christmas

Went to Youngs Brigade this morning. Found nearly the whole concern drunk. Returned to camp wrote to Ma & Annie and spent the dullest Christmas day since I can recollect. Weather very disagreeable.

Sunday 1st

Cleared off last night & to day the sun is showing beautifully. Making every thing look cheerful & pleasant. Hope it may prove ominous of grand & glorious results to attend our arms and Country during the present year. May the present witness the end of this bloody strife with the independence of our Sunny land. Spent the day alone in camp. Wrote to Sister Francis.

Wednesday Feby 1st

Took the cars at 6 am. got to R—————d at 8 & spent the day Had a very dull time. spent the night at Ellisons

Sunday 5th

Went down to Stone Church 8 ms from Staunton and heard a good sermon from Rev Mr Boman who formerly preached in Greensboro. Came back & spent the night at the Hotel.

Wednesday 8th

Cleared off last. Pretty day but for the Snow. Genl Lee & Staff left for Richmond with his command & so we will have to truge back down the country again very soon.

Saturday 18th

Left R—————d and went out to Fitz Lee's H'd qrs on the nine mile road about 7 ms from town.

Sunday 19th

Remained at H'd qrs all day with the blues. Shermans advance entirely cuts me off from getting or ever hearing from home for an indefinite period. The fall of Columbia & Charleston and the gloomy prospects generally are exceedingly depressing.

Tuesday 28th

Got back to camp at Belfield. Rained all day & the roads were terrible bad.

[This is the last entry in Tucker's diary]

Journalistic Warfare: The *Atlanta Constitution*,
the *Birmingham Age-Herald* and the Rube Burrow Interview

by

William Warren Rogers, Jr.

A sensational headline, "Rube Talks Constitution Man Tracks the Outlaw to His Lair," dominated the *Atlanta Constitution's* Sunday feature section on November 10, 1880. Habitual readers of the *Constitution* knew of Rube Burrow. The newspaper had given considerable coverage to the South's best known outlaw over the preceding two years. The interview, complete with sketches, had been conducted by a reporter named E. W. Barrett. An enterprising correspondent, Barrett had made his reputation the preceding election year covering the Washington political scene for the *Constitution*.¹

Over in Alabama the *Birmingham Age-Herald* replied to the Georgia paper's scoop with a startling expose-style headline: "Buncombe: Biting at a Bogus Burrows." In scathing words the Alabama paper ridiculed Barrett's claim. A brief but vituperative newspaper war ensued between the two largest dailies in the neighboring states.²

Both of the metropolitan newspapers were among the foremost of Southern journals. The *Atlanta Constitution* had been founded in 1868 and still had the services of Managing Editor Henry W. Grady.³ The *Birmingham Age-Herald* had begun in 1888 as a consolidation of two papers, the *Age* and the *Herald*.⁴ Although the *Constitution* and *Age-Herald* were not rivals in

¹*Atlanta Constitution*, November 10, 1889. A number of "dime novels" were written about Burrow in the 1890s. The best of them is George W. Agee, *Rube Burrow, King of Outlaws and His Band of Train Robbers, an Accurate and Faithful History of Their Exploits and Adventures* (Chicago, 1890). A scholarly work is William Warren Rogers, Jr., "Violence And Outlawery In The New South: Rube Burrow's Train Robbing Days In Alabama, Mississippi, And Florida," Unpublished Master's Thesis, Auburn University, 1979.

²*Birmingham Age-Herald*, November 10, 1889.

³Louis Turner Griffith and John Erwin Talmadge, *Georgia Journalism 1763-1950* (Athens, 1951), 339-340.

⁴Rhoda Coleman Ellison, *History and Bibliography of Alabama Newspapers in the Nineteenth Century* (University, Alabama, 1954), 13.

circulation wars, each used the Burrow incident to build reader interest. Beyond that, a triumph scored against the other would build prestige over highly competitive journalistic rivals in Birmingham and Atlanta.

If the title of being the South's most prominent paper was debatable, the distinction of being the region's most prominent outlaw was not. Rube Burrow was, without contest, the most notorious fugitive from justice from Virginia to Texas. Rueben Houston Burrow, more familiarly known as Rube, was born in northwest Alabama's Lamar County sometime in 1854 or 1855. The fourth child of Allen and Martha Burrow, Rube grew up working on the family farm. By 1872 he was tired of the dull monotony and hard work on the farm. Like many Southern youths of the time, he was lured by stories of excitement and easy money in Texas. He and his uncle, Joel Burrow, left their impoverished Alabama neighborhood and headed West. Besides the legitimate avocation of farming and the less acceptable occupation of bartending, Burrow adopted another way of making a livelihood in Texas: train robbing.

In 1887 Rube returned to Alabama. Whether it ever occurred to Burrow to reform once back in his home state is not clear. If so, the thought quickly passed. Rube and Leonard Brock, a friend with Georgia connections, crossed into Mississippi and robbed a train at Duck Hill in December, 1888. In July, 1889, Rube killed a postmaster who refused to give him a disguise he had ordered by mail. The senseless murder provoked Governor Thomas Seay to send a militia company to Lamar County. Two months later Rube strayed from his native region with two comrades and held up a train at Buckatunna, Mississippi.

After the robbery at Buckatunna, Rube sought and found refuge in Lamar County. Interspersed with small farms and dominated by timbered hills and rocky ravines, Lamar County was sparsely populated and rural. In the Alabama of the 1880s blood ties transcended respect for the law when family members were threatened. Rube's numerous relations hid him, provided the outlaw with food, and warned their wayward kinsman when detectives entered the area. Lamar County was an ideal hide-out.⁵

⁵Atlanta *Constitution*, November 3, 1889; Montgomery *Advertiser*, January 26, 1888.

Other than murder, the outlaw had confined himself to robbing trains. Railroads with their high rates and railroad officials with their arrogance were unpopular in the South. Burrow's bold and successful robberies made him a folk hero. The general public followed his exploits with interest and sympathy. After all, they reasoned, Burrow was only stealing from thieves. They liked his defiant style and enjoyed the frustration of the carrier lords.

It occurred to Correspondent Barrett that an interview with the outlaw would be of enormous interest. Burrow might be a criminal, but he was also a celebrity. In October, 1889, Barrett crossed into Alabama and traveled north to Lamar County. About that time, Rube was reported in nearby Blount County. Supposedly, Rube and a train robbing associate were cornered there and engaged in a running battle with lawmen. Barrett hastened to the scene.

In a staked-out farmhouse Barrett interviewed Henry Fischer, a Southern Express Company detective. During the course of the conversation with Detective Fischer, Barrett revealed his plan to interview the fugitive. After overcoming astonishment and doubt that the brash Barrett was in earnest, the detective was openly dubious. He described the outlaw as a man "shrewd though ignorant; brave, though vain; desperate though fond of notoriety," and as one always on the alert⁶ Fischer doubted that the wary outlaw would consent to an interview. Still, he believed that Rube's consuming ambition was to become as famous as the western outlaws (Jesse James and Sam Bass) and the hero of dime novels. By touching Rube's vanity, Fischer speculated, he probably would talk at length. First, though, he would have to be convinced that Barrett really was a journalist, a man capable of immortalizing him, and not another masquerading detective.⁷

As events proved, Rube was not even in Blount County, but Detective Fischer's balanced remarks inspired the indefatigable Barrett. The interview with Fischer and other information he gathered enabled Barrett to evaluate Burrow as a man rather than as a fugitive. He returned to Lamar County

⁶Birmingham News, November 12, 1889.

⁷*Ibid.*

and got off the Kansas City, Memphis and Birmingham train at the small town of Sulligent. Without much difficulty he located Jim Cash, Rube's brother-in-law. Cash hesitated to cooperate until Barrett produced a letter of introduction from Congressman John H. Bankhead, a north Alabama solon and member of an influential family. Whatever Barrett's merits as a reporter were, he was both intrepid and resourceful. He convinced Cash to take him to Allen Burrow's country home. The inquisitive correspondent got first-hand information about Burrow during the rough seventeen mile wagon trip. Cash spoke of Rube's "good grit" and absolved him of past crimes.

At first Allen Burrow was wary of the stranger Jim Cash presented. Recently, detectives in all guises had infiltrated Lamar County. After consulting privately with Cash, Rube's father finally agreed to talk with Barrett. The unaffected, work-hardened Burrow praised his son as a boy who had been easy to raise. The elder Burrow regretted that Rube had been associated with some bad men in Texas but was adamant in denying that he had murdered anyone or had committed the various crimes attributed to him. Allen Burrow's defense was a classical apology for the prodigal son. When Barrett asked him if he had seen Rube recently, Burrow professed ignorance. No, he did not know where his son was.⁸

The entire interview and Barrett's impressions were published in a full-length *Constitution* feature the following week. Included in the story was an account of Burrow's life and crimes. The Atlanta paper's editors regretted that an interview with Rube had not been possible, but, considering the outlaw's reputation, they were relieved to see Barrett emerge alive from Lamar County. The return of the *Constitution's* journalist from the Alabama wilderness was "like the old Methodist preacher, who sent out his hat for a collection among the brethern and getting it back empty, still raised his hand in pious gratitude and said 'I humbly thank God for the return of my hat.'"⁹

Less than a week later, the undaunted Barrett returned to Lamar County. Inspired by the reader response and in the

⁸Atlanta *Constitution*, November 3, 1889.

⁹*Ibid.*

best tradition of Richard Harding Davis, Barrett was tenacious in his quest for the story. He applied the theory of universal greed by offering \$200 to anyone who could arrange a meeting between him and the outlaw. Several Lamar countians interpreted Barrett's proposal as an easy way to make money. Reversing the classic situation of the city slicker victimizing the country bumpkin, the rural opportunists laid their plans. They arranged with a former deputy-sheriff, who both resembled Rube and knew his background, to talk with Barrett. In mock secrecy, the interview was elaborately staged in a desolate ravine. Barrett returned to Atlanta, sure that he had talked with the Lamar County desperado.¹⁰

Saturday afternoon newspapers in Birmingham announced at the Atlanta paper's request that a "Constitutional Special" would arrive the next morning (November 10) and provide citizens of the Magic City with "a full and interesting interview with Rube Burrows [*sic*]."¹¹ A special train, whatever its expense, would dramatize the *Constitution's* achievement. Despite earlier reports by the Birmingham *Age-Herald* that Barrett had been "used up by Cash" in Lamar County, it seemed that the correspondent's article would be a journalistic tour de force.¹² How, Alabamians wondered, had their own state's journalists managed to be so embarrassingly scooped? Where were the *Montgomery Advertiser*, the *Mobile Register*, and, more inexplicably, the Birmingham dailies?

If Barrett was convinced that he had interviewed the celebrated train robber, the Birmingham *Age-Herald* was not. The *Age-Herald* had learned the truth about Barrett's alleged interview from sources in Lamar County. The opportunity to upstage its Georgia counterpart was an open and irresistible invitation. The Alabama newspaper chartered a train to Atlanta and clandestinely sent a special edition of the *Age-Herald* to press. A skeleton *Age-Herald* staff loaded the freshly printed papers, climbed aboard, and the Georgia Pacific train departed for Atlanta at 2 a.m. Sunday morning.¹³

¹⁰Birmingham *Age-Herald*, November 10, 1889.

¹¹Birmingham *News*, November 9, 1889.

¹²Birmingham *Age-Herald*, November 8, 1889.

¹³*Ibid.*, November 11, 1889

Meantime, in Atlanta some *Constitution* officials, E. W. Barrett, and nineteen carefully chosen newspaper boys, readied themselves for the five-hour run to Birmingham. At precisely 3:30 a.m. the bunting draped locomotive pulled out of the Forsyth Street crossing. A colorful sign emblazoned with the words "Constitution Special" hung from the side. The train slowly gathered momentum and soon reached a comfortable pace of fifty miles per hour. Inside, the pride of the *Constitution's* newspaper boys — Big Jay Bird, Roxie Calloway, Coon Reynolds, and others — finished sorting papers and caught some sleep.

At an unlikely time (dawn) and place (Tallapoosa, Georgia) the converging trains met. An impromptu and unexpected meeting occurred when the two cars stopped within six feet of each other at the Georgia-Pacific depot. Barrett expressed some surprise at discovering the *Age-Herald* contingent and its mission to Atlanta. Pleasantries but no papers were exchanged, the trains refueled, and the "race of news" continued.¹⁴

The Birmingham train reached its destination first, arriving in Atlanta about 7:30 Sunday morning. *Age-Herald* representatives immediately delivered a copy of their journal with the compliments of "Birmingham and Her Enterprising Paper" to the *Constitution's* downtown office.¹⁵ Word quickly spread in the capital city, and citizens snapped up copies of the paper. The newspaper boys enjoyed the luxury of receiving as much as twenty-five cents a copy. Atlantians read with bemused curiosity the Birmingham paper's front page rebuttal. Crudely etched sketches mocking Barrett complemented the article and were the source of mirth. By ten o'clock the paper had sold out.

Before reaching Birmingham, the "Constitution Special" stopped briefly in Anniston, Alabama, to drop off three newspaper boys and one thousand copies of the *Constitution*. By the time the train arrived at Birmingham, a crowd had gathered at the depot. The newspaper boys never had such an easy

¹⁴Atlanta *Constitution*, November 11, 1889; Birmingham *Age-Herald*, November 11, 1889.

¹⁵Birmingham *Age-Herald*, November 11, 1889.

time peddling their product. An observer commented that not even at election time had he seen papers go so fast. The gaily decorated car presented an incongruous splash of color in the drab grey of downtown Birmingham; reports estimating that 20,000 people milled around the car were exaggerated, but the crowd was large. Far from taking offense, Birmingham citizens patronized and welcomed the *Constitution*. Before the demand for papers was satisfied, the supply ran out.¹⁶

In the incredible episode's aftermath both the *Age-Herald* and the *Constitution* emphatically claimed victory. The bad editorial blood that already existed between the two journals added a tinge of acrimony to an affair that was largely humorous. "Birmingham is enjoying the novelty of a real Sunday newspaper," the *Constitution* chided.¹⁷ The *Age-Herald*, in reprisal, advised the Atlanta paper to "shinny on its own side of the line," and "keep to its own territory in the future."¹⁸ The Atlanta paper added that "it was worthwhile to come and see Birmingham even if they hand't got what they came for — a scoop on the *Age-Herald*."¹⁹

In Atlanta, the efforts of reporter Barrett drew unstinted praise. The *Constitution* maintained that the *Age-Herald* story only served "to advertise and to make more prominent Mr. Barrett's courageous and admirable piece of work."²⁰ Barrett, himself, acknowledged that the *Age-Herald* had come up with "quite an ingenious contrivance with which to shield themselves from the ignominy of being 'scooped' almost at home."²¹ Had the Alabama paper missed an opportunity? Not according to its editors. "If such a thing as an interview with Rube had been possible, the *Age-Herald* would have had it long ago."²²

Each paper remained convinced that it had prevailed over

¹⁶Atlanta *Constitution*, November 11, 1889; Birmingham *Age-Herald*, November 11, 1889.

¹⁷Atlanta *Constitution*, November 11, 1889.

¹⁸Birmingham *Age-Herald*, November 10, 1889.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, November 11, 1889.

²⁰Atlanta *Constitution*, November 11, 1889.

²¹*Ibid.*

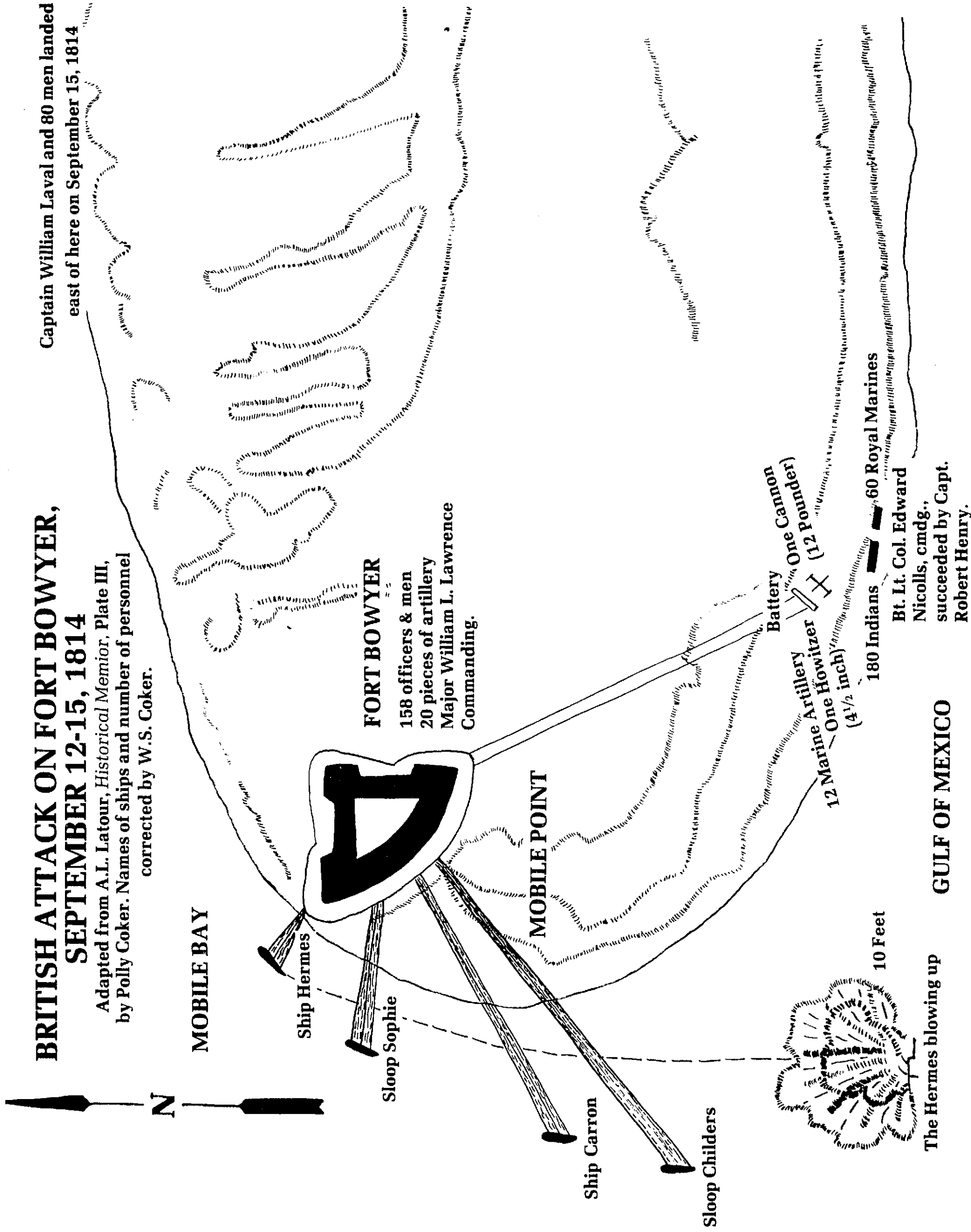
²²Birmingham *Age-Herald*, November 10, 1889.

the other. If the *Constitution* realized its folly, the paper never admitted it. E. W. Barrett's career did not suffer. An almost scoop was better than no scoop at all. The episode added up to a bogus interview, a newspaper war that briefly increased circulation for both papers, and the further spreading of Burrow's fame. There was also the enrichment by \$200 of some shrewd Lamar countians.

BRITISH ATTACK ON FORT BOWYER, SEPTEMBER 12-15, 1814

Adapted from A.L. Latour, *Historical Memor.*, Plate III,
by Polly Coker. Names of ships and number of personnel
corrected by W.S. Coker.

Captain William Laval and 80 men landed
east of here on September 15, 1814



THE LAST BATTLE OF THE WAR OF 1812:
NEW ORLEANS. NO, FORT BOWYER!

by

William S. Coker

I first became interested in Fort Bowyer on Mobile Point, now Fort Morgan, while collecting documents for the editorial project, "The Papers of Pantan, Leslie and Company," later John Forbes and Company, for which I serve as director and editor.¹ After the United States occupied Mobile in April of 1813, the Army Quartermaster there purchased from John Forbes and Company office supplies and building materials: lumber, bricks, and tools which were used in the construction of Fort Bowyer.² I then read a number of accounts about Fort Bowyer and was surprised to learn that the battle for Fort Bowyer in February, 1815, was the last battle of the War of 1812. Later, when I mentioned that fact, several persons not only expressed surprise but asked, "Where is Fort Bowyer?" After that reaction, I decided to put the subject to further testing.

At several professional historical meetings within the last year or so, I casually mentioned that New Orleans was not the last battle of the War of 1812. Invariably those listening asked: "Well, if New Orleans was not the last battle, what was?" Such responses came from a wide range of historians. I then decided to see what the United States history textbooks had to say about it. A review of five different survey volumes revealed that only one even mentioned Fort Bowyer.³ That

¹William S. Coker, "The Papers of Pantan, Leslie and Company," *Ex Libris* (Fall, 1978), II(2), 13-15.

²U. S. Army Quartermaster Accounts, John Wirt, 1813-1814 (Selected), National Archives Records Group 94, Washington, D. C.

³These particular volumes were chosen only because they were in my personal library. Richard B. Morris and William Greenleaf, *U.S.A. The History of a Nation*. (Chicago, 1969); Oscar Theodore Barck, Jr. and Hugh Talmage Lefler, *A History of the United States to 1877* (New York, 1968); Samuel Eliot Morison and Henry Steele Commager, *The Growth of the American Republic*. (New York, 1950); Oscar Handlin, *The History of the United States*. (New York, 1967); and Richard Hofstadter, William Miller and Daniel Aaron, *The American Republic*. (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1959, 1964). Fort Bowyer is not mentioned in Wayne Andrews

reference was a note on a map which showed Fort Bowyer on Mobile Point and the date of the battle fought there as September 15, 1814.⁴ This referred to the first battle for Fort Bowyer. Nothing was said about the second battle.

I quickly discovered that information in the surveys about the War of 1812 on the Gulf Coast was not only limited, but in several instances was in error. One textbook stated, "Aware that the British might use Pensacola in Spanish Florida as a base, Jackson invaded the area and burned the town."⁵ That statement indicated the authors were not aware that the British were already using Pensacola as a base of operations, as they did in their first attack upon Fort Bowyer in September, 1814, but in addition, General Andrew Jackson did not burn the town. The British had threatened to destroy Pensacola when Jackson occupied it in November of 1814, but after firing a few shells into the city from their warships in the harbor, the British destroyed Spanish Fort San Carlos de Barrancas and the fort on Santa Rosa Island and then retired from the area.⁶ Both forts were located some miles from Pensacola. But worse, one volume devoted to the War of 1812 referred to the second battle for Fort Bowyer and stated that the fort "meekly surrendered without a shot fired."⁷ The authors failed to explain how fourteen persons were killed and twenty-eight wounded "without a shot fired." Even a comparison of the

(ed.), *Concise Dictionary of American History* (New York, 1962), nor does it appear in David C. Roller and Robert W. Twyman (eds.), *The Encyclopedia of Southern History* (Baton Rouge, 1979).

⁴Morris and Greenleaf, *U.S.A.*, I, 388.

⁵Hofstadter, et. al., *The American Republic*, I, 345.

⁶Andrew Jackson to Richard Sparks, Pensacola, November 9, 1814, Andrew Jackson Papers, Hermitage, Tennessee; John Innerarity to James Innerarity, Pensacola, November 10, 1814, Greenslade Papers, Florida Historical Society, Tampa; John Innerarity to John Forbes, Pensacola, May 22, 1815, Forbes Papers, Mobile Public Library, Mobile, Alabama; According to the Surveyor-General of West Florida, the British destroyed the "Military Post of Barrancas" and the "Fort of Santa Rosa" on the evening of 7 and the Morning of 8 Noyember 1814. "*Plano de la Bahia de Panzacola y sus inmediaciones*" by Vicente Sebastian Pintado, Pintado Papers, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress, Washington. See also William S. Coker, "John Forbes & Company and the War of 1812 in the Spanish Borderlands," in William S. Coker (ed.), *Hispanic-American Essays in Honor of Max Leon Moorhead* (Pensacola, 1979), 74-75.

⁷James Ripley Jacobs and Glenn Tucker, *The War of 1812: A Compact History* (New York, 1969), 186.

major monographs on the war revealed discrepancies and omissions regarding Fort Bowyer. But my topic is Fort Bowyer and only secondarily a critique of the histories of the war as they relate to that subject.

A few days after the surrender of the Spanish Fort Carlota at Mobile to the United States Army on April 15, 1813, General James Wilkinson visited Mobile Point, located some thirty miles southeast of Mobile. After he had determined that a fortification on the point could control access to Mobile Bay from the Gulf of Mexico, Wilkinson ordered nine of the heaviest cannon taken from the Spaniards to be moved there. Wilkinson then reconnoitered as far east as the Perdido River, but soon returned to Mobile Point, where aided by an engineer, a Monsieur Pilie, the General staked out a fort which he named Seraf.⁸ Wilkinson remained there only briefly and by mid-May had departed for New Orleans,⁹

To complete construction of the fort, General Thomas Flournoy, who succeeded to the command at Mobile, ordered Colonel John Bowyer from the Perdido to Mobile Point, where he arrived on June 8, 1813. Bowyer commanded the fort for more than a year.¹⁰ In November of 1813, news reached Bowyer that a British force had arrived at Pensacola. All available troops were rushed to Mobile Point in anticipation of a British attack. This was the occasion when British naval officers called at Pensacola and entertained some southern Indian chiefs, who petitioned them for uniforms, swords, and

⁸General James Wilkinson, *Memoirs of my own Times*. (Philadelphia, 1816; Reprint ed.; New York, 1973), I, 522-23; Peter J. Hamilton, *Colonial Mobile*, edited by Charles G. Summersell (University, Alabama, 1976), 415, states that Wilkinson sailed for the mouth of the bay to look into the establishment of a fort on April 20. For a discussion of the topography and other physical details of the area see Major A. Lacarriere Latour, *Historical Memoir of the War in West Florida and Louisiana in 1814-15*. A facsimile reproduction of the 1816 edition with introduction by Jane Lucas de Grummond (Gainesville, 1964), 30-32.

⁹James Wilkinson to General John Armstrong, May 15, 1813, Records of the Secretary of War, Letters Received, W-181(7) Inc. NARG 107.

¹⁰John Bowyer to Secretary of War, June 19, 1815, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Registered series, Microcopy M-221, reel 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C. This letter is a resume of Bowyer's military career and indicates that he served in the South from 1797 until 1814 and participated in most of the major events which took place there during those years. My thanks to Colonel Powell A. Casey of Baton Rouge for calling it to my attention.

commissions. The British remained there only temporarily on this visit.¹¹ In January of 1814, Major Barthelemi Lafon, an Army Engineer, noted the vulnerability of the fort to a land attack from the east, and recommended that steps be taken to remedy that situation. The following summer, perhaps because of Lafon's report and because it was believed that Fort Bowyer was indefensible, Flournoy ordered Colonel Bowyer to abandon the fort, to remove the troops, cannon, stores, and even the buildings, to Fort Charlotte [Carlota] at Mobile.¹² It might be added that the Secretary of War concurred in Flournoy's decision.¹³ Bowyer had accomplished his mission by July 5, 1814, and left Mobile for Plattsburg, New York, and the northern theater of the war on August 24.¹⁴ Thus the man after whom the fort was named did not have the honor of defending it when the British did attack.¹⁵

British strategy for their Gulf Coast campaign was sound: capture Fort Bowyer and Mobile, attract as many Indians and slaves to the British standard as possible, and march overland to Baton Rouge. There they could stop reinforcements and supplies from reaching New Orleans via the Mississippi River on the north. With a British fleet blockading the entrance to the lakes on the east and access to the Mississippi River on the south, New Orleans would be effectively isolated.¹⁶ Jackson

¹¹When the British arrived at Pensacola, Bowyer was in Mobile and received the news from a Captain Alexis commanding the Navy at Mobile Point. Alexis reported that seven sail, some brigs with 200 men aboard, and two bomb vessels had arrived at Pensacola, Bowyer to General [W. C. C.] Claiborne, November 26, 1813, *ibid.*, reel 50; J. Leitch Wright, Jr., *Britain and the American Frontier 1783-1815* (Athens, 1975), 164. See also John K. Mahon, *The War of 1812* (Gainesville, 1972), 341.

¹²B. Lafon to ?, Fort Charlotte, January 25, 1814, M-221, reel 63; Bowyer to Secretary of War, June 19, 1815, *ibid.*, reel 59.

¹³Armstrong to Jackson, July 2, 1814, in John Spencer Bassett (ed.), *Correspondence of Andrew Jackson*. (Washington, 1926-1933), II, 14, 27n2.

¹⁴Bowyer to Secretary of War, June 19, 1815, M-221, reel 59.

¹⁵Some years later the fort was entirely rebuilt and was renamed for General Daniel Morgan of Revolutionary War fame, Earl Warren Stapleton, "A History of Fort Morgan, Alabama, from 1813 to 1864" (Unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Alabama, 1950), 1; James Parton did not think the name change appropriate and wrote: "the fortification will be known to posterity as Fort Bowyer, though the name has since been most unpatriotically and immorally changed to Fort Morgan," *Life of Andrew Jackson*. (New York, 1861), I, 601.

¹⁶Proclamations of Sir Alexander Cochrane, Bermuda, April 2, July 1, 1814, War Office 1/143: 31, 70; Memorial of the Services of Major Edward Nicolls to Lord

constantly warned that if the British successfully carried out their plans, New Orleans and the entire countryside would be an easy conquest. Prize-money was the incentive as it had been in all amphibious operations recommended by the Royal Navy for over two centuries and New Orleans was the ultimate objective. There they expected to seize an estimated four million pounds sterling of commodities: cotton, sugar, tobacco, hemp, lead, and ships.¹⁷

But the consequences of a British victory on the Gulf Coast would be more far-reaching than prize-money. Between 1810 and 1813 the United States had annexed or occupied all of Spanish West Florida between the Perdido and Mississippi Rivers under the pretext that this area was included in the Louisiana Purchase of 1803.¹⁸ No modern historian would give any credence to such a claim, but during that era the march of Manifest Destiny was not to be impeded by any Socratic dialogue about the limits of the Louisiana Purchase. Since Great Britain and Spain were allies, the British were not expected to restore any of their conquests in West Florida to the United States, but would return them instead to Spanish

Melville, May 5, 1817, War Office 1/144:196-98, Public Record Office, London. Good secondary accounts of British strategy on the Gulf Coast may be found in Wright, *Britain and the American Frontier*, 160-65; Harry L. Coles, *The War of 1812* (Chicago and London, 1965), 206-207; Marquis James, *The Life of Andrew Jackson* (Indianapolis, 1938), 184; and especially Mahon, *War of 1812*, 341-43.

¹⁷Apparently Jackson did not address himself directly to this point until February of 1815, but all of his correspondence from the summer of 1814 on leaves no doubt about his sentiments on the subject, Jackson to James Monroe, New Orleans, February 18, 1815, Bassett, *Jackson Correspondence*, II, 174. See for example, Jackson to Armstrong, Fort Jackson, August 10, 1814, and Jackson to Secretary of War, Mobile, August 30, 1814, *ibid.*, II, 26, 37. On New Orleans and prize-money see Colonel Sir Alexander Dickson, "Artillery Services in North America in 1814 and 1815," *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research* VIII (April, 1929), 83-84.

¹⁸Isaac Joslin Cox, *The West Florida Controversy, 1798-1813* (Reprint ed.; Gloucester, Mass., 1967), 312ff. In 1813-1815 Fort Bowyer was located in Mobile County, Mississippi Territory. Although the United States did not occupy Mobile until April 15, 1813, Governor David Holmes of the Mississippi Territory had created Mobile County on August 1, 1812. It included the territory south of the 31st parallel lying between the Perdido and Pearl Rivers, Clarence Edwin Carter (ed.), *The Territorial Papers of the United States: Mississippi* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1934-62), VI, 305-06. Of course, Spanish officials protested such action and Spain continued to claim the area as a part of Spanish West Florida until she ceded the Floridas to the United States in 1819, Cox, *West Florida*, 605, 654-55.

control.¹⁹ Thus, in a real sense the fate of the Gulf Coast was at stake, and Fort Bowyer on Mobile Point was the key to British plans. If Fort Bowyer fell, the history of Fort Charlotte at Mobile indicated that it would not offer much opposition to an invading army. The vulnerability of that fort had forced the British to surrender it to the Spanish in 1780 after only a token battle, and the Spanish in turn, had given it up without a fight to the Americans in 1813.²⁰ Thus, in the summer of 1814, Captain Sir William H. Percy of His Majesty's Navy, and brevet Lieutenant Colonel Edward Nicolls of the Royal Marines, laid their plans to capture Fort Bowyer.

The British were not very secretive about their intentions. Before Nicolls left Havana for Pensacola, word had reached Mobile that it was to be attacked.²¹ Even before such news arrived, the inhabitants of Mobile met on July 20, 1814, and appointed commissioners to communicate with General Jackson to complain about the abandonment of Fort Bowyer and the defenseless state of Mobile.²²

In August, before he left Fort Jackson for Mobile, Jackson ordered Colonel Richard Sparks at Mobile to restore Fort Bowyer. When he arrived at Mobile on August 22, Jackson met Major William L. Lawrence as the Major was preparing to go to Mobile Point with a force of 160 men.²³ Jackson knew that the British expected to be in possession of Mobile within a month.²⁴ During the next few weeks Lawrence and

¹⁹Major Howell Tatum, who was with General Jackson, recorded that they anticipated a joint Anglo-Spanish attack to recover that part of West Florida occupied by the United States, in order to return possession of it to the Spanish government, John Spencer Bassett (ed.), "Major Howell Tatum's Journal while Acting Topographical Engineer (1814) to General Jackson," *Smith College Studies in History* VII (1921-1922), 62.

²⁰Major Tatum claimed that Mobile was incapable of defense, and that for its safety they must rely on its outposts, Bassett, "Tatum," 63; Mahon, *War of 1812*, 347. On the British surrender of Mobile in 1780, see J. Barton Starr, *Tories, Dons and Rebels* (Gainesville, 1976), 161-74. On United States occupation of Mobile in 1813 see among others, H. Wesley Odom, Jr., "Cayetano Perez and the Fall of Mobile" (Unpublished M. A. Thesis, University of West Florida, 1977), 49-66.

²¹James, *Jackson*, 184.

²²Bassett, *Jackson Correspondence*, II, 14nl.

²³Bassett, "Tatum," 51; Coles, *War of 1812*, 203.

²⁴Jackson to Col. Robert Butler, Mobile, August 27, 1814, Bassett, *Jackson Correspondence*, II, 32. See also Jackson to Sparks, Mobile, August 27, 1814, Jackson Papers, Hermitage, Tennessee.

his men worked feverishly to reconstruct the fort and to prepare it for the anticipated attack. Cannon from the fort soon controlled the water passage to Mobile, but the fort was not constructed to sustain a land attack from the east.²⁵ Thus the problem which Major Lafon had noted earlier had not been corrected in the construction of the new fort. Lawrence gained a few days respite when Captain Percy delayed the attack on Fort Bowyer while he sent an officer unsuccessfully to enlist the services of the pirates of Barataria.²⁶

In the meanwhile, Colonel Nicolls, who had arrived in Pensacola, confided his plans to attack Fort Bowyer to the Spanish Governor Mateo Gonzalez Manrique, who, in turn, revealed them to his confessor, Father James Coleman. Coleman lost no time in telling the merchant John Innerarity, who headed John Forbes and Company in Pensacola. Innerarity feared for the safety of the company property at Bon Secour, not far from Mobile Point, and the extensive company interests at Mobile managed by his brother, James. Innerarity also resented the fact that earlier that year the British had forced the company employees at Prospect Bluff on the Apalachicola to abandon the trading post there, had refused to return nine company slaves who had taken refuge in the recently constructed British Fort near the store, and had detained a herd of more than 200 head of company cattle to feed their Indian allies in West Florida. Even though Innerarity was a Scotsman and was expected to be an ally of Colonel Nicolls, he sent a rider — Paul Revere style — by the name of McVoy to warn the commander at Fort Bowyer that the British were coming. Nicolls discovered what Innerarity had done and quickly ordered several Marines and a number of Indians to give chase. McVoy abandoned his horse in the swamps and managed to reach Fort Bowyer one jump ahead of his pursuers. Although

²⁵Col. Thomas L. Butler to Lawrence, Mobile, September 5, 1814, Jackson Papers, Hermitage, Tennessee. In this letter Butler advised Lawrence that if a land force appeared in the rear of the fort, he was to fire two minute guns of the longest caliber to warn Jackson to come to the fort's assistance. Lt. Col. W. Lawrence to A. J. Dallas, New Orleans, April 25, 1815, M-221 reel 63.

²⁶Captain Nicholas Lockyer to Captain Percy, September 11, 1814, Cochrane Papers, Ms. 2328, f.81; Jane Lucas de Grummond and Ronald R. Morazon, *The Baratarians and the Battle of New Orleans* (Baton Rouge, 1961), 37-41, 53; Mahon, *War of 1812*, 348; Coles, *War of 1812*, 204; Reginald Horsman, *The War of 1812* (New York, 1969), 226, 233.

they knew that the Americans were forewarned, the British decided to attack anyway.²⁷

The British forces employed in this attack included four ships, with a combined total of seventy-eight cannon and 600 men. Their land party consisted of sixty royal marines, twelve marine artillery, and 180 Indians with two cannon.²⁸ The American force at Fort Bowyer, which amounted to 158 men and officers with twenty pieces of artillery, faced a combined British sea and land force of 852 men and eighty cannon.²⁹ Although Lawrence and his men agreed to fight until further resistance was futile, there is no justification for the claim

²⁷Nicolls to Cochrane, undated, but ca. March 1816, WO 1/144:72-73, PRO, London; Edmund Doyle to [John Innerarity], Prospect Bluff, July 4, 16, and 22, 1814, Greenslade Papers, Florida Historical Society; Doyle to Captain R. C. Spencer and Robert Gamble, Prospect Bluff, April 6, 1815, Forbes Papers, Mobile Public Library, Mobile. For a convenient summary of the charges and countercharges between Innerarity and Nicolls, see Coker, *Hispanic-American Essays*, 69-72.

²⁸Figures on the number of British and American troops involved vary widely. Latour stated that the British landed 600 Indians or Spaniards and 130 marines, *Memoir*, 34. There were no Spaniards in the landing force. Lawrence reported the landing party consisted of 400-500 men, Jackson to Lt. Col. Thomas H. Benton, Mobile, September 13, 1814, in Bassett, *Jackson Correspondence*, II, 48. Horsman gave the number as sixty marines, twelve marine artillery, and 130 Indians, *War of 1812*, 232. Captain Percy advised Admiral Cochrane on September 9 that Nicolls had volunteered to go on the expedition with forty marines, twenty marine artillery, 130 Indians and a howitzer, Percy to Cochrane, Pensacola Bay, September 9, 1814, Cochrane Papers, Ms. 2328, folios 74-80, National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh. Several years later Colonel Nicolls wrote that the force consisted of sixty royal marines, twelve marine artillery and 180 Indians, Nicolls to Lord Melville, May 5, 1817, WO 1/144:196-98, PRO, London. Captain Robert Henry's report on the land force does not mention any specific number of troops involved, Captain Robert Henry to Lt. Col. Nicolls, Pensacola, September 20, 1814, Cochrane Papers Ms. 2328, NLS. Because Nicolls commanded the land force until he became ill, I have elected to use his figures even though his report came several years after the event.

²⁹American strength reports ranged from 130 to 158 officers and men. Compare Latour, *Memoir*, 34, and Jackson to Monroe, September 17, 1814, Bassett, *Jackson Correspondence*, II, 50-51. Jackson also reported the British force consisted of 110 Marines and 200 Creek Indians and twenty artillerists. Jackson indicated that Captain [George] Woodbine commanded the land party, but it is clear from Captain Henry's report that he, and not Woodbine, was in overall charge. Woodbine undoubtedly commanded the Indian contingent which may have already been incorporated into the 1st Battalion, Royal Colonial Marines, Nicolls to the Commissioners for Virtualling His Majesty's Navy, Pensacola, October ?, 1814, Cochrane Papers, Ms. 2328, f. 102.

that they adopted the motto "DON'T GIVE UP THE FORT!"³⁰

Percy landed the marines and Indians about nine miles east of the fort on September 12. Contrary winds prevented the ships from attacking the fort until the 15th. Finally, on the afternoon of the 15th, the ships began their attack. During the subsequent artillery duel between the fort and the ships, the *Hermes*, its bow spring cut by a cannon shot, drifted within close range of the fort. Intense fire from Fort Bowyer severely damaged the ship. Captain Percy managed to move the *Hermes* out of range of the fort's cannon, but he soon abandoned it and set the ship on fire. It burned until about 10 p.m., when the fire reached the powder magazine and the *Hermes* blew up with a tremendous explosion, which was heard by Jackson in Mobile. In the meanwhile, the British land force, commanded by Captain Robert Henry — Colonel Nicolls had become ill and had been taken aboard the *Hermes* — had moved within 800 yards of the fort on the 14th but retreated when the fort began returning their fire. On the 15th, the land force again approached the fort and fired its cannon and howitzer until there were only three rounds left. They then advanced even closer, expecting to cooperate with a landing party from the ships with scaling ladders, but when they noted the *Hermes* had been abandoned, they retreated dragging their howitzer with them.³¹ Jackson, who had been enroute by schooner to the fort to inspect it when the action commenced, returned to Mobile and sent eighty men under Captain William Laval to reinforce Major Lawrence. But they could not land during the heat of the battle and retired to a point a few miles east of the fort. When the *Hermes* exploded, Laval thought the explosion came from the fort. He returned to Mobile and advised Jackson that the British had captured

³⁰Stapleton, "Fort Morgan," 11, makes this claim as does Peter J. Hamilton, *Colonial Mobile* (Boston, 1897), 379. Stapleton cites Latour, *Memoir*, 35-36, but nowhere in Latour does he make such a statement. Hamilton provides no documentation for his statement, but obviously used Latour.

³¹This brief account of the battle merely touches the highlights and follows the reports of Captain Percy, Percy to Cochrane, September 16, 1814; and Captain Henry, Henry to Nicolls, September 20, 1814, Cochrane Papers, Ms. 2328, NLS. Major Lawrence's report agrees in most details with the reports of Percy and Henry, Lawrence to Jackson, September 15-16, 1814, in S. Putnam Waldo, *Memoirs of Andrew Jackson* (Hartford: Roberts & Burr, 1818), 165-68. For additional details of the battle see Bassett, "Tatum," 56-57.

Fort Bowyer. Jackson determined to retake the fort and was making preparations to do so when he received word that the fort was safe and that the British force had retreated.³² Jackson was estatic and proclaimed: "The gallant Lawrence, with his spartan band, has given them [the British] a lecture that will last for ages."³³ The box score of this battle for Fort Bowyer read: twenty-three British killed and forty-seven wounded with ten later dying of their wounds; four Americans killed and five wounded.³⁴ Colonel Nicolls, who

³²After Jackson met the officer dispatched by Lawrence to warn of the expected attack, Jackson ordered his schooner returned to Mobile. Because of contrary winds, it took fourteen hours for Jackson just to reach the mouth of Dog River, nine miles below Mobile. It was not until the night of September 14 that he finally arrived in Mobile, Thomas L. Butler to Lawrence, Mobile, September 14, 1814, Jackson Papers, Hermitage; Bassett, "Tatum," 55-56; James, *Jackson*, 189-90. If Lawrence had fired the predetermined signals no mention was made of it. The strong northern winds, however, would have prevented them from being heard very far to the north. Several men disagreed with Laval's report that the fort had blown up, claiming that it had been the British ship instead, Bassett, "Tatum," 58; Jackson to Col. Robert Butler, Mobile, September 17, 1814, in Bassett, *Jackson Correspondence*, II, 49-50.

³³Proclamation by Andrew Jackson, Mobile, September 21, 1814, in Latour, *Memoir*, Appendix, No. XVI. See also Jackson to Monroe, Mobile, September 17, 1814, in Bassett, *Jackson Correspondence*, II, 50-51.

³⁴Casualty figures vary widely; Latour, *Memoir*, 40, reported 160 British killed on the ships and two on land, and seventy wounded; while Horsman, *War of 1812*, 233, lists thirty-two killed and thirty-seven wounded and reports no land casualties; Wilburt S. Brown, *The Amphibious Campaign for West Florida and Louisiana, 1814-1815* (University, Alabama, 1969), 45, gives twenty-seven killed and forty-five wounded and does not indicate whether they were sea or land casualties; James, *Jackson*, 816n8, gave thirty-two killed and forty wounded without distinguishing land or sea.

Captain Percy's casualty report indicated that there were seventeen killed and twenty-five wounded on the *Hermes*, five killed and seventeen wounded on the *Sophie*, and five wounded on the *Carron*. Of this number five from the *Hermes*, four from the *Sophie*, and one from the *Carron*, who were severely wounded, died within a month after the battle. I am indebted to Dr. Larry Owsley of Auburn University and Dr. William S. Dudley of the Naval Historical Center, Washington, D. C., for the shipboard casualty report and for the figures of those who died after the battle. See Percy to Cochrane, September 16, 1814, Admiralty 1/505, Part 2 of 5, pp. 321-23, PRO, London; Henry to Nicolls, September 20, 1814, Cochrane Papers, Ms. 2328, NLS, indicated only one of the land party killed and listed no wounded which when added to Percy's figures gives a grand total of twenty-three killed and forty-seven wounded with ten later dying from their wounds.

While the reports on American casualties also vary, I have used the figures rendered by Major Lawrence in his report of the battle, Lawrence to Jackson, Fort Bowyer, September 15-16, 1814, in Waldo, *Jackson*, 166. Lawrence also reported

was thrice wounded and lost an eye in the battle, blamed their failure to capture Fort Bowyer upon "that villain," John Innerarity.³⁵

On their retreat overland from Mobile Point, the Indians and their British accomplices sacked the Forbes company store at Bon Secour and made off with all of the equipment, supplies, cattle, horses, and ten of the company slaves. In all the company losses amounted to \$5,890.³⁶ Jackson ordered two infantry detachments to cut off the retreating British force, but they arrived too late to accomplish their mission.³⁷

Lawrence's victory at Fort Bowyer greatly boosted the morale of the Americans on the Gulf Coast and gave a severe shock to the British. The strategic importance of the victory was very significant.³⁸

The British failure to capture Fort Bowyer did not force them immediately to give up the idea of taking Mobile. In fact, it was not until after Jackson chased the British out of Pensacola in November of 1814 that the British commanders lost interest in such a campaign and changed their strategy for

that a Captain Walsh and several men (Bassett, "Tatum," 57, gives the figure as 10-12 men) were burned by an accidental explosion of some cartridges inside the fort, *ibid.*, 168.

³⁵Nicolls to Lord Melville, May 5, 1817, WO 1/144:196-98, PRO, London.

³⁶John Innerarity to Mateo Gonzalez Manrique, Pensacola, October 28, 1814, Green-slade Papers, Florida Historical Society; Nicolls to Mateo Gonzalez Manrique, Pensacola, October 22, 1814, Forbes Papers, Mobile Public Library, Mobile; Mateo Gonzalez Manrique to Ruiz de Apodaca, Pensacola, October 30, 1814; and [John Innerarity] to [John Forbes], Pensacola, November 2, 1814, Cruzat Papers, Florida Historical Society; Richard S. Lackey (Comp.), *Frontier Claims in the Lower South . . . During the War of 1812* (New Orleans, 1977), 25-28, 42-44. Captain Henry's report indicates that when he reached Bon Secour on September 17, he found Lieutenant Castle and a detachment of Indians already occupying the site. Henry's party killed two bullocks and ordered some flour. When they marched out that afternoon, Henry stated that they took with them ten black men who had volunteered their services, stating that they belonged to a Mobile merchant. They reached the Perdido on the 18th and Pensacola on the 19th of September. Henry to Nicolls, Pensacola, September 20, 1814, Cochrane Papers, Ms. 2328, NLS. Obviously, the ten blacks were the property of John Forbes and Company.

³⁷Bassett, "Tatum," 63-64

³⁸Claiborne to Jackson, New Orleans, September 20, 1814, in Bassett, *Jackson Correspondence*, VI, 441-42; Jackson to Monroe, Pearce's Stockade, October 26, 1814, *ibid.*, II, 83; Horsman, *War of 1812*, 233.

the attack upon New Orleans.³⁹ This is not the place to relate the details of the Battle of New Orleans; that story is well known. Unfortunately, many accounts of the War of 1812 end with the great American victory there on January 8.

In spite of Jackson's concentration upon the defenses of New Orleans, he had not neglected Fort Bowyer. In November of 1814, after his victory at Pensacola, Jackson reinforced Fort Bowyer to such an extent that he predicted "that ten thousand troops cannot take it."⁴⁰ It is obvious that Lawrence's successful stand there in September had deluded Jackson into believing that Fort Bowyer was now virtually invincible. Although the figures are not available, it appears that Jackson probably increased the size of the garrison to nearly 400 men. Although thankful for the reinforcements received, Lawrence, now a brevet lieutenant colonel, in December of 1814, warned General James Winchester, commanding at Mobile, of the land mounds to the east of the fort which could provide cover for an enemy. He pointed out that the rear or land side of the fort was not constructed to be defended from that direction. As a result, General Winchester promised protection on the land side if he received timely notice.⁴¹

Even after Jackson reached New Orleans, he did not lose sight of the importance of Fort Bowyer. Before the battle for New Orleans, he had warned General Winchester to send sufficient supplies to the fort. "Mobile Point," he wrote, "must be supported and defended at every hazard."⁴² On January 30, three weeks after the battle at New Orleans, Jackson wrote Winchester that he had no idea if the enemy would attack

³⁹*Ibid.*, 233; Brown, *Amphibious Campaign*, 74.

⁴⁰Jackson to General James Winchester, Mobile, November 22, 1814, in Bassett, *Jackson Correspondence*, II, 106.

⁴¹Lawrence to A. J. Dallas, April 25, 1815, M-221, reel 63. Major Tatum had suggested a plan to provide some protection to the fort from the land side. He thought that the highest sand mound to the rear of the fort should be fortified and that a large well-armed ship should be stationed in Navy Cove, northeast of the fort. Such a vessel could prevent the enemy from sending landing parties by barge from Dauphin Island, and its guns could clear the enemy from behind the fort if he approached by land, Bassett, "Tatum," 60. Jackson also thought such a vessel stationed in Navy Cove would protect the rear of the fort and strongly urged the Secretary of War to furnish the ship, Jackson to Monroe, New Orleans, December 10, 1814, in Bassett, *Jackson Correspondence*, II, 111-12.

⁴²Parton, *Jackson*, II, 56.

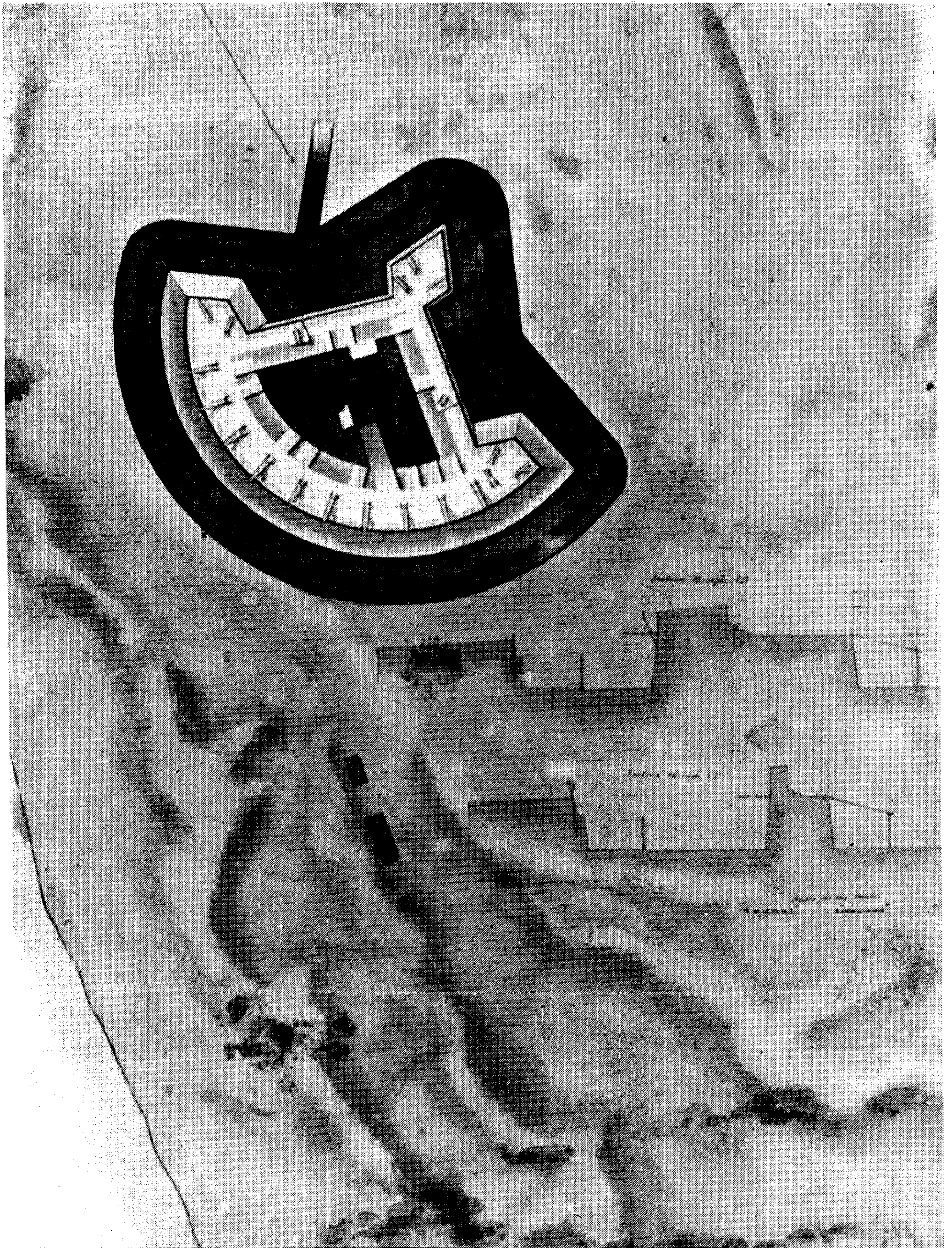
Fort Bowyer, but advised that "you cannot be too well prepared or too vigilant — adml. Cochrane is sore, and Genl. Lambart crasy [*sic*], they may in this situation attempt some act of Madness — if their Panic does not prevent it."⁴³

The last shot at New Orleans had hardly been fired, when the British moved a naval force up the Mississippi and began bombarding Fort St. Philip. After ten days of intense bombardment, the British failed to reduce the fort, and they retired on January 18.⁴⁴ British pride was now on the line and they determined to avenge their losses. By January 28, they had decided to land on Dauphin Island to reorganize the army, and had also decided that Fort Bowyer must be taken. After that, a decision would be made regarding Mobile.

Bad weather delayed British plans for at least a week. On the evening of February 6, a line of battleships and other vessels anchored off Dauphin Island. The following day the 1st and 3d Brigades, the 85th Regiment, and others landed on the island while the 2d Brigade prepared to take up its position several miles east of Fort Bowyer. At the same time thirty-eight ships of the line also took up their positions and sealed off the sea approaches to Mobile Point from the north, south, and west. On February 8, the 4th, 21st, and 44th Foot of the 2d Brigade composed of about 1,300 or 1,400 men along with supporting artillery and engineers disembarked about three miles from the fort. Major General John Lambert and several officers inspected the fort from a safe distance and concluded that an infantry assault was impracticable but agreed that artillery could reduce the fort with a minimum of risk. By nightfall the British had begun trenching operations near the fort. The guns from the fort — there were only seven cannon mounted on the rear — fired at these men, whose dark bodies were easily distinguished against the white sand, killing eight or ten and delaying the digging of the trench. Several other British soldiers had also been killed and wounded as they moved towards the fort. On the 9th the fort continued a heavy fire towards the rear at anything that moved and man-

⁴³Jackson to Winchester, New Orleans, January 30, 1815, in Bassett, *Jackson Correspondence*, II, 155.

⁴⁴Report by Major W. H. Overton, Ft. St. Philip, January 19, 1815, in Latour, *Memoir*, Appendix, No. XXXIV.



Mobile Point—1815. Plan and two sections of Fort Bowyer showing positions of guns by Charles R. Scott, Royal Staff Corps. MPH 73(3), W.O. 1/141, p. 253, courtesy of the Public Record Office, London.

aged to disable several artillery carriages. In order to counter this, the infantry pushed close to the fort and protected by sand dunes, began an intense and well-directed musket fire that nearly silenced the fort's cannon. That night Colonel Lawrence's men piled sandbags on the rear parapets as cover for their muskets and made sandbag embrasures for their cannon. Earlier that same day, the British artillery officers had selected the sites for their cannon and had begun work to ready them for the big guns.

A lively exchange of musketry occurred all during the day of the 10th. The British moved the 85th Regiment, consisting of the 85th Light Infantry and the 95th Riflemen, with about 700 men from Dauphin Island to their assembly area east of the fort. This enabled the 44th Foot to move into position nearer the fort. On the night of the 10th the trench near the fort was extended to within forty yards or so of the counter-scarp. Early the next morning, the British moved their artillery into position as additional artillerymen and a rocket detachment with 100 twelve pound rockets were brought over from Dauphin Island. The stage was set and the British planned to open a devastating artillery barrage at 10 a.m. on the 11th.⁴⁵

⁴⁵This account is based upon General Lambert to Earl Barthurst, Isle Dauphine, February 14, 1815, in Latour, *Memoir*, Appendix No. LXVI; and especially Dickson, "Journal," 178, 213-27. See also Latour, *Memoir*, 207-15. Latour's figures for the number of British troops landed on Mobile Point, 5,500 or more, are questionable, although in all fairness to Latour there are no accurate or reliable figures. Utilizing the strength figures from Dickson's "Journal," 86, 214, and 222, and the strength and casualty figures from Latour's *Memoir*, Appendix, Nos. LXIV and LXVI, and Plate IX, I have attempted to provide a better estimate of the British forces investing Fort Bowyer by land in February, 1815.

	<i>No. of Troops</i>
2d Brigade — 4th, 21st, and 44 Foot — Jamaica, November, 1814	2,535
[Latour lists 2,500 present at New Orleans]	
Casualties of 2d Brigade at New Orleans including killed, wounded and missing in action	1,187
Total after Battle of New Orleans	1,348
Seaman on shore Mobile Point, February 10, 1815	200
Royal Artillery strength ready for the attack on February 5, 1815	153
85th Regiment — 85th Light Infantry and 95th Riflemen less Captain Lane's Rocket Brigade — at Jamaica	944
[Latour lists 1,150 at New Orleans]	

As these events unfolded, inside the fort, Lawrence had an effective force of 320 out of a total of 375 officers and men. But in addition, there were twenty women, sixteen children, and three servants. All preparations within the fort were completed, except that there was no casement or bomb shelter for the protection of the dependents, the sick, and the wounded.⁴⁶ On February 6, when Lawrence first became aware of the enemy's intentions, he had notified General Winchester in Mobile. Winchester received the request for assistance on the 7th, but it was not until the 10th and 11th that he sent reinforcements under the command of Major Uriah Blue across the bay to divert the British. The detachment landed at little Bay John about nine miles east of the British position. Shortly after the landing, the British captured Blue's three schooners, but Blue in reply took a British barge with seventeen seamen.⁴⁷

Casualties of 85th Regiment at New Orleans including killed, wounded and missing in action	231
<hr/>	
Total after Battle of New Orleans	713
Miscellaneous engineers including sappers, etc. on Mobile Point generously estimated at	586
<hr/>	
Total estimated British strength on Mobile Point	3,000

Thus I believe the number of British troops present was about 3,000 as compared to the 5,500 or more given by Latour.

⁴⁶Again strength figures within the fort are confusing. Several accounts list sixteen officers, sixteen sergeants, sixteen drummers, and 327 rank and file, for a total of 375, Hamilton, *Colonial Mobile*, 381-83; Stapleton, "Fort Morgan," 23. Latour, *Memoir*, 214, stated that there were only 320 fit for duty. General Winchester reported that there were "about" 360 officers and men there, Winchester to Secretary of War, Mobile, February 17, 1815, in Latour, *Memoir*, Appendix XXXIX. After the battle, the British listed 366 prisoners, Jackson to Governor David Holmes, New Orleans, February 21, 1815, in Bassett, *Jackson Correspondence*, II, 178. No combination of figures, including the one person killed in the fort, totals 366. The lack of a casement or bomb shelter was a serious deficiency, Latour, *Memoir*, 33. A British officer present at the battle noted the absence of the bomb shelter to protect the inhabitants and wrote that some were even sleeping in tents, The Author of the Subaltern, *The Campaigns of the British Army at Washington and New Orleans, in the Years 1814-1815* (London, 1827), 360-63. The latter without the author's name is a revised edition of his 1821 study, see Carson I. A. Ritchie (ed.), "British Documents on the Louisiana Campaign, 1814-15," *Louisiana Historical Quarterly* XLIV (1961), 106.

⁴⁷Lawrence to Dallas, April 25, 1815, M-221, reel 63; Winchester to Secretary of War, Mobile, February 17, 1815, in Latour, *Memoir*, Appendix, No. XXXIX. See also Stapleton, "Fort Morgan," 24, and Dickson, "Journal," 227, on Major Blue and the reinforcements sent by Winchester.

By the morning of February 11th, casualties had amounted to thirteen British killed and eighteen wounded, while the Americans had suffered one killed and ten wounded, including Colonel Lawrence. Without any protection from incoming artillery shells, the fort's powder magazine was exposed. One hot shot in the right place and the fort, with all of its personnel, could be destroyed.⁴⁸ Before opening their artillery offensive the British displayed a flag of truce. Brevet Major Harry Smith, later Lieutenant General Sir Harry Smith, carried General Lambert's offer to Lawrence: either surrender the fort or send out the women and children. Smith later recorded a rather fanciful conversation with Lawrence, which undoubtedly had improved with the years. Smith informed Lawrence that he had done all that any soldier could have been expected to do. Smith advised him that if Lawrence did not surrender, the British would "blow up the fort and burn your wooden walls about your ears." Lawrence accepted the honorable terms proffered by Smith, and the following day, February 12, the Americans marched out of the fort and stacked their arms.⁴⁹ Lawrence wrote General Jackson that "nothing but the want of provisions, and finding myself completely surrounded by thousands" had forced him to deliver Fort Bowyer to the enemy.⁵⁰

Jackson's reaction can be anticipated. To James Monroe, Jackson wrote: "I received the sad intelligence of the surrender of fort Bowyer: this is an event which I little expected to happen, but after the most gallant resistance; that it should have taken place, without even a fire from the enemy's batteries is as astonishing as it is mortifying."⁵¹

Jackson's regard for Colonel Lawrence also underwent a substantial change from that evidenced the previous Septem-

⁴⁸Latour, *Memoir*, 213-14; Horsman, *War of 1812*, 260; Stapleton, *Fort Morgan*, 22.

⁴⁹Sir Harry Smith, *The Autobiography of Lieutenant-General Sir Harry Smith*, edited by G. C. Moore Smith, (New York, 1902), I, 248-50. According to Lt. Col. Alexander Dickson, Col. Lawrence had requested the delay in turning the fort over to the British because many of his men had gotten drunk, Dickson, "Journal," 226.

⁵⁰Lawrence to Jackson, Fort Bowyer, February 12, 1815, in Latour, *Memoir*, Appendix, No. XXXIX. The articles of capitulation follow Lawrence's letter.

⁵¹Jackson to Monroe, New Orleans, February 24, 1815, in Latour, *Memoir*, Appendix, No. XLV. Latour indicated that the enemy's rear batteries had been firing before the surrender, *ibid.*, 212.

ber. On February 21, he wrote Governor David Holmes of the Mississippi Territory: "The fall of Fort Bowyer is truly grating to my feelings. If Lawrence had made such a defence as he made before what Laurels he would have added to his Brow but I am fearful his military fame is forever Blasted."⁵² One anonymous soul may have expressed Jackson's real feelings: "Great God, how fine a graveyard that Fort Bowyer would have made for Col. Lawrence."⁵³ Although Jackson was furious with Lawrence for surrendering the fort, Lawrence had held out as long as possible and to have done more would have been sheer suicide.⁵⁴ On February 13, two days after the surrender of the fort, the British naval commander, Sir Alexander Cochrane, notified Jackson that the treaty of peace ending the war had been signed.⁵⁵

When Jackson received Cochrane's message about the peace treaty, he did not immediately accept it at face value. He promptly published a proclamation in which he warned that the report might merely be intended to throw the United States off guard. "Fort Bowyer has fallen," he said, "but it must and will be speedily regained."⁵⁶ On the other hand, the people of New Orleans received the news of peace with great joy. They "declined to attach any importance to Fort Bowyer" and promptly forgot the little fort "as completely as if it were in China."⁵⁷ Many historians today appear to have taken the same attitude. The Army, however, did not forget Fort Bowyer nor Colonel Lawrence.

Lawrence appeared before a formal court of inquiry to answer for his conduct. In defending his actions Lawrence told the court that he had informed General Jackson of the weakness of his position. Jackson had replied that he would remedy that defect by reinforcing the fort by land, "observing,"

⁵²Jackson to Holmes, New Orleans, February 21, 1815, in Bassett, *Jackson Correspondence*, II, 178.

⁵³Unsigned and undated in Andrew Jackson Letters, reel 17, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress, Washington.

⁵⁴Brown, *Amphibious Campaign*, 161.

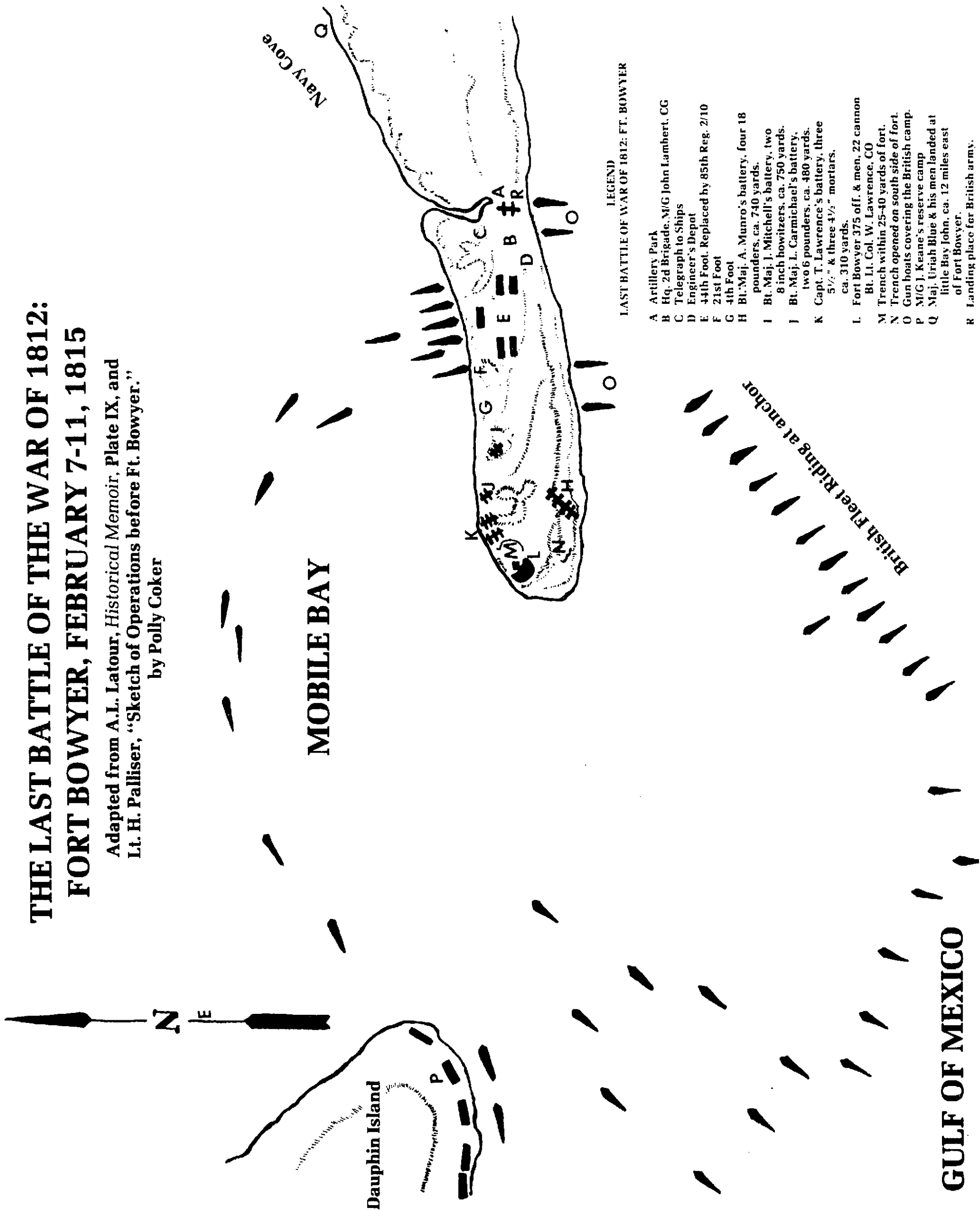
⁵⁵Cochrane to Jackson, Off Mobile Bay, February 13, 1815, in Latour, *Memoir*, Appendix, No. XXXVIII.

⁵⁶Address of General Jackson to the Soldiers and Citizens at New Orleans, February 19, 1815, in Latour, *Memoir*, Appendix, No. XLI.

⁵⁷James, *Jackson*, 255.

THE LAST BATTLE OF THE WAR OF 1812: FORT BOWYER, FEBRUARY 7-11, 1815

Adapted from A.L. Latour, *Historical Memoir*, Plate IX, and
Lt. H. Palliser, "Sketch of Operations before Ft. Bowyer."
by Polly Coker



Lawrence stated, "if we would defend the Front — he would take care of the rear."⁵⁸ Because of the overwhelming number of British troops involved, it is highly unlikely that any reinforcements Jackson or Winchester may have sent would have prevented the British victory. The court of inquiry cleared Colonel Lawrence of any misconduct.⁵⁹

Lawrence had successfully kept the fort out of British hands in September, 1814, and the delaying action he fought in February, 1815, prevented the British capture of the fort until February 11, just two days before news of peace reached the Gulf Coast. As Major General Wilburt S. Brown (USMC, Ret.) observed: "The value of the major's [Lawrence's] achievements is too often overlooked."⁶⁰

The facts speak for themselves. Although there is no comparison in the magnitude of the two battles, Fort Bowyer and not New Orleans was the last battle of the War of 1812, and the British won that battle.⁶¹ Nevertheless, Fort Bowyer

⁵⁸Lawrence to Dallas, April 25, 1815, M-221, reel 63.

⁵⁹General Orders, Headquarters, Western Section, 7th Military District, New Orleans, April 7, 1815, signed by Major General E. P. Gaines, cleared Lawrence of any dereliction of duty, in Latour, *Memoir*, Appendix, No. XL.

⁶⁰Brown, *Amphibious Campaign*, 168.

⁶¹Some historians might argue that Fort Bowyer was not the last "battle" of the War of 1812. On February 24, 1815, six barges carrying 250 British up the St. Marys River were fired upon and forced to return to Cumberland Island. Apparently the shots from both banks of the river were not returned by the men in the barges, who may have suffered as many as 160 casualties. Rembert W. Patrick, *Florida Fiasco* (Athens, 1954), 290-91. In addition, the war continued at sea until June of 1815, during which time several engagements between British and United States ships occurred, with casualties on both sides, Horsman, *War of 1812*, 262-63.

Patrick preferred to call the encounters on the St. Marys and off the Georgia coast "the last scene[s] of the War of 1812." It is true, the last shots of the war were not fired at Fort Bowyer, but none of the later "scenes" compared in magnitude with the battle at Fort Bowyer. Thus I still consider Fort Bowyer the last "battle" of the War of 1812.

The next battle on Mobile Point took place in 1864, when 2,000 Union troops commanded by Major General Gordon Granger landed east of then Fort Morgan on August 9. The same or similar sand hills which protected the British troops in February of 1815, also protected the Union forces forty-nine years later. In fact, the Union plan of attack of 1864 did not differ significantly from the British plan of 1815. But Fort Morgan suffered from the same deficiency which Fort Bowyer experienced; insufficient guns on the east side of the fort to protect it from land attacks. Only sixteen out of a total of 136 guns defended the land side of the

had played an important and perhaps even a pivotal role in the war on the Gulf Coast. We may not be able to get the authors and publishers of United States history textbooks to add Fort Bowyer to their volumes, but we can bring the fort to the attention of the general public and to those teaching United States history and hope that they will share that information with their friends and students.

Confederate-held fort. Fort Morgan was far better constructed than Fort Bowyer, but it held out only two weeks before the Confederates surrendered. For a discussion of Fort Morgan's defenses and a picture of the fort see James R. Hinds, "Stone Walls and Iron Guns: Effectiveness of Civil War Forts," *Periodical: Journal of the Council on Abandoned Military Posts* (January, 1981), 12(1):40-41, 43. For more on the Civil War battle at Fort Morgan see Albert Burton Moore, *History of Alabama and Her People* (Chicago and New York: The American Historical Society, Inc., 1927), 538-39; Thomas McAdory Owen, *History of Alabama* (Reprinted ed.; Spartanburg, S. C.: The Reprint Co., Publishers, 1978), 708-09.

Southern Evangelicals and the Social Order, 1800-1860. By Anne C. Loveland. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1980. Pp. xi, 293. Hard Back \$30.00, Soft Back \$12.95)

The title outlines an ambitious task limited in execution by a focus which gives the work coherence. "Evangelicals" are Baptist, Methodist and Presbyterian clergymen, the book a readable written survey of their social views. The author stresses a central theme: the ministers' concern for maintaining traditional reliance on God.

Nine chapters fall into three groups. The first group surveys conversion and calling, the ministry and revivalism. The second group of chapters concerns the "social order." Loveland rightly points out that ministers were concerned with individuals' conduct rather than with social structures. They urged obedience to authority and most avoided political involvement. Within the temperance movement ministers debated the church's proper role in reform. Ministers' involvement in benevolence increased throughout the period. But in the case of the Sabbatarian movement, "violations of the Sabbath continued, proof of the ineluctable advance of worldliness and secularization in the Old South" (p. 180). The author does not develop this and other provocative generalizations.

Concluding chapters survey slavery, the religious instruction of Negroes and the sectional controversy. Churches retreated from early antislavery positions. Ministers came to concern themselves with what Loveland terms "abuses" of slavery: denying the Gospel to slaves and denying or violating slaves' marriage relations.

In her survey of attempts to evangelize blacks, Loveland highlights the white ministers' opposition to black preachers. She gives no account of the activities of black preachers and exhorters trained and deployed with the encouragement and cooperation of whites. Loveland implies that separate churches for blacks were mainly products of white action. By the 1850s, she asserts, most evangelicals seem to have favored separate churches. Recent studies suggest instead that social control,

not separation, was the concern of white religionists, and that Black Christians were far from passive. Loveland does not bring her evidence to bear on these points of apparent contradiction.

For ministers, the author concludes, the sectional controversy involved fundamental moral and religious principles. Loveland stresses ministers' apolitical affirmations of penitence, prayer, and reliance on providence. The single paragraph with which she concludes both chapter and book bears quoting:

Thus, southern evangelicals relied on God to settle the sectional controversy just as they trusted in him to resolve the slavery question and to bring about temperance reformation. They were as dubious of human ability in social and political matters as in the matter of salvation. The belief in the sovereignty and omnipotence of God and the dependence of man formed the whole of their thinking, and more than any other single element, contributed to the distinctiveness of southern evangelical thought in the nineteenth century" (p. 265).

Loveland's repeated emphasis on this theme is misleading. It inclines readers to see the ministers as otherworldly personalities (as indeed the author suggests) and to miss the complex interaction between religious leaders' views and their culture. For example, ministers' relative effort for the religious instruction of Negroes and their relative lack of action to protect slave marriages, another avowed concern, were influenced by the economics of slavery, by social pressure and by the denominations' theologies and decision-making structures as well — elements Loveland neglects by adopting the ministers' individualistic perspective. We see certain views, but not the cultural context that shapes and is shaped by them.

The book surveys a selected slice of Southern clergy that is all white, proportionately more Presbyterian than denominational figures warrant, heavily Southeastern, and highly articulate. The volume itself is attractively produced, well bound,

carefully proofread. Unfortunately, the editorial decision to lump all sources for a paragraph into one footnote sometimes obscures the evidence. In addition, analyses and conclusions are frustratingly brief.

Louisiana State University professor of history Anne C. Loveland exhibits fluently written research in her first book about Southern religion. One hopes that the next one demonstrates a contextual sense of Southern religion and social order that this ambitious but flawed first attempt lacks.

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The Booker T. Washington Papers, Vol. 9: 1906-08. Louis R. Harlan, Raymond W. Smock, and Nan E. Woodruff (Editors), (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1980. pp. xxxii, 703, Bibliography and index. \$20.00)

Again, as in previous volumes, Booker T. Washington's complex and sometimes enigmatic personality comes to the fore. Through these "selected" letters, addresses, and journal articles Washington is at once educational institution leader, securer of philanthropic funding, leader of a moderate policy of racial advancement, secret financial backer of legal attacks on racial discrimination, advisor to Presidents, and a politician, himself, in every sense of the word. This volume pictures Washington in a very difficult two years of racial strife in the United States.

Washington's correspondence is laden with his concern for and satisfaction in his beloved Tuskegee, and nothing was allowed to stand in that institution's way. He was quick to terminate the services of a long-time chaplain on flimsy evidence of moral turpitude. His philosophy of integrating vocational attitudes and skills with intellectual pursuits never wavered in the slightest, and he stood ready to discharge those faculty members who refused to agree. He chastised a "friendly" race leader for leaning just a little in the di-

rection of "higher" education, though parental pride required him to rejoice with daughter, Portia, upon the successful completion of her advanced musical study in Germany.

Washington continually emphasized the importance of economic success as a prerequisite to racial uplift, though from time to time he was called upon by even friendly supporters to defend that position. He utilized every opportunity to point out in his own speeches and writings and to contribute to those of others information on the financial success that had been achieved in the black community.

The Tuskegee educator remained, as he had been before, a money and power broker. He was looked upon by philanthropists as an important source of information on the progress of black Americans and as a wise counsel in the allocation of funds to black educational enterprises. There is surprisingly little patronizing of philanthropists, though; astute politician that he was, he never appeared to reject the ideas of whites whose good will was important to him and/or Tuskegee. Two Presidents obviously perceived the Tuskegeean as spokesman for black America — an honor, though sometimes a dubious one. Despite the fact that he was frequently called upon for advice by Presidents Theodore Roosevelt and William Howard Taft, Washington was often disappointed by the frequency with which they ignored his advice. Yet, in the face of such disappointments, his support of the Republican Party never wavered. Racist utterances and policies of these two Presidents placed him in the unenviable position of needing to demonstrate to blacks that he did not sanction such policies while demonstrating to the Republican Party and to white philanthropists that he was not unmindful of their help. This predicament was all the more perplexing because of the increasing pressure on Washington from elements of the black community to be more assertive in the quest for equal rights.

These papers reflect the fact that Washington and his philosophy had fallen upon hard times. White Southerners, whom he considered to be blacks' best friends, participated in the Atlanta Race Riot and other atrocities; the President, whom he reputedly influenced, hastily punished only the black officers involved in the Brownsville affray; and the Niagara

Movement, which he vigorously opposed, seemed to be attracting progressively more of the race's promising leaders. Under such pressure, Washington was at his worst, advocating spying on opponents' meetings, investigating the private lives of opponents' families, and having editorials published under fictitious names in his secretly-financed newspapers.

The real Booker T. Washington was a complex man, as the material in this volume amply illustrates. This collection of more than 530 pieces of correspondence, plus assorted addresses and other items, presents a clearer picture of the "Wizard of Tuskegee" than has been seen before, although little in the nature of his behavior seems to be truly new. The editors are to be commended for a superb book, carefully edited, thoughtful annotated, and, presumably representative of the larger collection. This volume adds valuably to the collection and whets the appetite for volumes covering the last seven years of the black Alabama educator and renowned racial leader's life.

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